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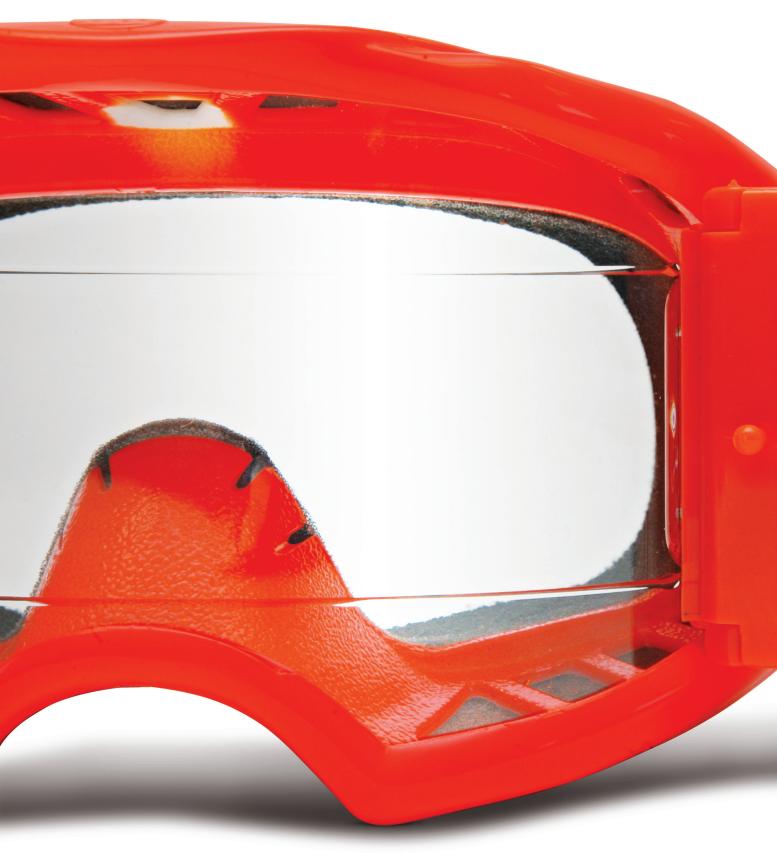








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COMMENT

ny good motocrosser will tell you that the key to success in this sport is commitment. Commitment to training hard, commitment to nailing that double, commitment to making that pass and so on and so forth.

The biggest difference between an average racer like myself and an MX god like Ryan Villopoto is commitment. Natural talent and good will will only get you so far but to be the best requires an awful lot of commitment - financial, physical, mental and possibly more although I wouldn't really know because I'm not an MX god.

I wish I could look back on my racing career and think I gave it everything I had but the truth is I was pretty frickin' lazy when it came to doing the things that really mattered. I didn't mind grinding out motos at the practice track so much but I wasn't willing to do enough of the right things off the bike to make me masterful on it.

I did have a lot of fun doing what I did and made a million and one happy memories that I still cherish today but deep down I know that I could have done a whole lot more to be successful. And that kind of hurts now the reality of knowing that I can't do what I once did has fully set in.

There's a lot to be said about being older and wiser and I wish I knew then what I know now. I feel like I should have given it my all and put absolutely everything I had into being a winner. But at the same time a question I keep asking myself is 'if I had. would I be any happier right now?

A lot of that doubt comes from looking at and listening to Ryan Villopoto as well as reading what he has to say about his career in interviews and whatnot. There's no denying that Ryan committed himself fully to the cause and won a lot of races and championships because of that commitment. But despite all that success and the trimmings that come with it he just doesn't seem all that happy in himself and hasn't done for a fair few years.

But that amount of commitment needn't always lead to misery and I can say that for sure after making the ultimate commitment to the love of my life, my very best friend and the mother of Arthur, my son (he's just turned one - happy birthday Bubby).

Yep that's right, on September 11, I got married to Rebecca in a fairly secret ceremony in The Lakes and you know what? I've felt like nothing but a champion ever since...

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THE EIGHT-TIME CHAMP GETS BACK ON HIS BIKE IN TIME FOR THE GLEN HELEN MXGP FINALE...

f I'm honest with you I've really been struggling at being kept away from my bike but finally I'm back on it! The last time I spent this much time away from the bike was back in 2008 after I hurt my knee in South Africa and I was operated on.

The last time I rode that was not in a race was the Wednesday before Maggiora. It was the last training before my home race and I could never have imagined that this would be my last session for two-and-a-half months! It has been a hard time for me but I've been riding again since September 1 and I'm so happy to be spending some good time on the track.

Although I've not been racing I've not been far away from the races. I went to Assen for the last of the European rounds of the MXGP 2015 just to see how cool the track was at that superb venue. I've been to Assen several times for the MotoGP in the past but I never could have imagined that it would be possible to build up such a great sand track in only three days – I was impressed.

In Holland Romain Febvre won the title. I think that he deserves it because he was the most consistent through the entire season, being fast and avoiding any mistakes and any injury so congratulation to him for this achievement – winning is never easy!

After the Grand Prix of Assen I went back to Belgium in order to see my little pal Gianluca Facchetti – who after his accident is now finally at home with his family – and to prepare the last race of the year in America. I really wanted to travel to the USA for this race because it had been too long since I'd raced against my adversaries.

Glen Helen is a place that I've always loved.

The track is huge, really fast and there are many lines that you can choose. I like the way they prepare the ground that goes up and down over some huge hills in the middle of the desert. I have some very good memories of racing here and the best are those from 2010 when I was riding the 350. I scored one of my best holeshots ever in front on my buddy Mike Alessi and I won the race, riding almost half of the last moto without the shifter lever that I'd broken in a deep rut.

I was only able to use third gear for several laps and as you can imagine it was not the easiest but it was a good challenge and I always love a good challenge!

This year almost everything was different – I was coming back from an injury and my physical condition was less that 50 per cent. I didn't race with any specific target in mind, I just rode because we wanted to use the race as a test for many new parts for the 2016 bike. There is no better place to test than in a race and if you don't have the pressure to score a result it's even better. So at the end of a really tough weekend with some incredible temperatures I'm very happy.

I have plenty of good sensation while riding – even if I'm a bit sore after the race – and I had good feeling with the bike and the track, even with my poor physical condition. I was able to make two good starts – one a holeshot – and I was the fastest on track which makes me feel better as I look to the upcoming months of training.

This was my last race for the moment because I will not compete at the Motocross of Nations in Ernee this year. Unfortunately, I'm just not fit enough for that race and I can't participate but I wish all the best to my team-mates Tommy Searle, Shaun Simpson, Pauls Jonass and all the others that will race in France next week.

Now it's time to celebrate my 30th birthday! My girlfriend Jill had this crazy idea to make a video with birthday wishes from loads of our friends and the result is incredible. In the next few days you'll be able to see the entire video on YouTube with more than 100 clips sent to me from friends all over the world and some, I guarantee you, are really funny! People like Valentino Rossi, Jorge Lorenzo and many colleagues from MXGP did something funny on the camera and some like Helena and Evgeny Bobryshev are hilarious!

Anyways, thanks a lot to you all for the huge amount of wishes that I've received through social media this year, it's meant a lot to me.

Grazie mille ragazzi, a presto (Thanks a lot guys, see you soon)!

Jour Ja





THE 121 ON GETTING MARRIED, FINDING A NEW RIDE AND THE MYSTERIOUS WORKINGS OF THE ROYAL MAIL...

orry ladies, this is the last time I'm gonna pen something as an unattached man as by the next time this deadline comes around I'll be hitched to the old lady, my bae, my slam piece, the object of my erections, the old ball and chain... But, really, next month I'm getting married

to my best friend, Ashley. To be honest I don't think it'll change much because we already have a life together, a mortgage and have lived together for a bunch of years but now she'll be legally entitled to half of my fortune. That's my Mac, a mountain bike, a caddy van, four-burner BBQ grill and a 1993 Massey Ferguson. But in all honesty I am looking forward to it.

The day after FatCat a bunch of us are heading abroad for the stag do and then once we get back we have a week to go until the big night and then Mrs Mac and I will go away on a Southern Asian cruise for just over two weeks before coming home and getting stuck into my prep for 2016.

Which leads me conveniently onto... Aye, it's true, I've got one more year (at least) on the tour. I'm happy that it's finally the right time to tell you that I've signed to ride for the Apico Husqyarna team alongside Steven Clarke next season and I'm genuinely looking forward

The Apico Husky squad extended a helping hand when I ran into a difficult time during the season because I was considering sitting out the rest of the year at one point when the financial implications of my Foxhill disaster weekend took its toll. Rich Clarke - Steven's dad and the team owner - kindly extended me a lifeline for the rest of '15 if I was serious about parking the #121 and I respected him for his phone

call. Of course, I respectfully declined as I like to be an honourable guy myself to all those that are in my corner already but it opened up the dialogue for this new deal to be thrashed out for next season.

It wasn't as simple as being offered a deal and saying yes, though. I have huge loyalties to all of my existing sponsors who have supported me for years and that was my biggest sticking point. The brands that have had my back for a long time aren't just product sponsors anymore but good pals. So I was hung up on that aspect because while the new team has some equally great brands supporting them which I'm sure are run by some sick people that I look forward to bro'ing down with, it felt like in some cases I was thinking about cheating on my fiancee.

But we live in the real world and those guys who have had my back all these years assured me we'd still be buds and they just want to see me riding my dirt bike regardless and I thank all of them for that.

So on that note, with my mind at rest, I'm pumped to be able to ride for the Apico Husky team next year. As much as bikes, parts and the financial aspect of a deal is important I'm a people person too - I need to get on well with the people. I just like to have fun, man. Already I have huge respect for Richard Clarke and I've always had a pretty straight relationship with his son Clarkey - as a competitor with no secret sexual undertone.

We've always had something big in common something about 6ft 2in and 15 stone, give or take a little, going by the name of Stuey Summers. Stu is and has been for a long time - Ste's on-off mechanic for much of his career and I think generally oversees

the day-to-day operations of their team.

Stuey and I grew up racing youth nationals together and he was my mechanic when I rode for CAS Honda in '09 and we get on real good. In fact, when it came time to return my contract for the coming year I WhatsApp'd Stu for his address. He had been giving me heat for a week or two about it and so when he didn't respond straight away I started giving him sh*t asking if he wanted it.

I eventually sent a picture of an envelope on which I had written 'Stu Summers, The Black Country, West Midlands'. He replied saying 'send it, that'll make it here, everyone knows me'. I laughed – if they did know him it would be for all the wrong reasons and after a lot of smack talk about how 'Mr Worldwide' he is I actually did send it. The West Midlands has a greater population than Scotland but the letter found its way to his door! No sh*t! Stu is famous.

It had a first class stamp and made it in second class time - the Royal Mail must have Liam Neeson working in the sorting office!

A few weeks later he needed to send me something and asked for my address so I gave him it. Brymac, Scotland!





DISCUSSING THE INTERNATIONAL SIX DAY ENDURO DEBACLE...

here would we be without a little controversy at the ISDE? After all, seemingly never a year goes by without some kind of incident that overshadows the event in some way, shape or form incident, to a greater or lesser extent...

But this year it was a biggy - an 'issue' that well and truly impacted on the 90th running of the Olympics of Motorcycling.

For those that might have missed it, at the end of day three the jury disqualified eight riders. Among them were French, Spanish, US and Italian competitors and one British rider - David Knight. Why were they disqualified? Because they went the wrong way and rode a part of the previous day's course, which they weren't supposed to be on.

In doing so they missed a route check point - a kind of stop-and-go check by the organisers. But it wasn't a time control - the places at which riders have to present their time card throughout any given event.

Normally, most all incidents regarding alleged course infringements trigger sizeable debate of the 'did they/didn't they' kind. But in Slovakia things were different. The riders did go the wrong way, no questions asked. How do we know that? Because when they did get to the next time control, they held their hands up and admitted the errors of their way. In their eyes it was simply a mistake.

Interestingly, the official track inspector also

made the same mistake as the eight disqualified riders!

Fast-forward to the start of day four and all eight disqualified riders took to the start, which was the first somewhat confusing message sent out. Even those involved in the event started asking what was going on. Doesn't a disqualification mean you're disqualified?

From there things hit an elevated level of weird. While the riders were unofficially back in the race - they were racing but just not showing in the results - they were effectively riding under protest. Nothing new there as it's been done before, just not to eight World Trophy team riders.

Then - yes things got even harder for folk to understand – the French federation pushed a little harder and all eight riders were reinstated. What this meant was that they were allowed to race but that the FIM's Independent Disciplinary Court might still agree with the jury's initial decision to disqualify them.

Being back in the game pleased all eight previously disqualified riders but seriously pissed off the Australians. But as far as most could see the situation mostly damaged the event.

Most likely the most complex event on the FIM calendar in terms of rules and regulations, the six days is anything but simple to govern. So, who should have the final say on such serious matters? Should the jury's decision be absolute? Or, should riders, teams and

federations be able to appeal against these decisions?

And how fiercely should a rulebook be applied and where does common sense come into play? Yes, the riders got things wrong but they gained nothing. Nothing. Working to the letter of the law when policing a sporting event is fine when it's a truly professional affair but if you step back and take a slightly more real world look at this situation it involves individuals that have, like many others, made significant personal sacrifice to support the event.

That said (and said loud and clear by the Aussie contingent in Slovakia) rules is rules and the book full of cans and cant's applies to each and every rider who signs up for the event. Sometimes they work in your favour, sometimes not.











Romain Febvre takes MXGP World Championship Victory for Yamaha

The French rider rode an amazing rookie year in the FIM Motocross World Championship on his YZ450FM. Febvre took an incredible 13 moto wirs, including his sturning race at the inaugural Assen GP to seal the title with two rounds left to run of the season. His incredible performance shows what the YZ450F machine is capable of and you too can experience the YZ450Fs full potential with the newly launched 2016 4-stroke models. See our website for more details.







OUR FACTORY SPECTATOR GETS READY TO PARK HIS BIKE UP FOR THE WINTER...

ince there are adverts everywhere for the International Dirt Bike Show and there's a nip in the air (which means you have to take a hoody to the track) it can only mean one thing – it must mean that the end of the 2015 season is pretty much here!

My last race in pencilled in for Landrake on October 17 and after that I'm looking forward to having a month off my scrammy. That's not because I've had enough of riding/racing but because I think that if you've been at it all year then you should have a break otherwise you'll get burnt out. I don't want that to happen to me – I've been close to it before during a season and that wasn't ideal!

On the other end of the motocross ability scale to me is Ryan Dungey. He sat out the Motocross of Nations last weekend to take a well earned break from racing. You can't knock him for skipping it after doing 17 Supercross events and 12 Outdoor Nationals – with only five weekends off since January.

For Ryan the MXoN is never a simple case of flying in, racing and flying out. Jet lag, chasing bike settings and the pressure of Uncle Sam on his shoulders are a just a few reasons behind his decision to sit it out this year. You can't really knock him for skipping it and he'll be back at it soon enough at the Red Bull Straight Rhythm followed by the Monster Energy Cup.

Dungey claims that he trains less now he's on Aldon Baker's programme than he did when he trained on his own which makes you wonder how much he did before. They say that Baker contributed to the premature burning out of RC and RV on a programme that was less than what Ryan was training so who knows how he

would have ended up if he hadn't linked up with Aldon?

The life of a pro-motocrosser may look and sound glamorous but I bet that it isn't. It really is a 365 days a year deal for those at the top and RC and RV retired while still winning at 26-27 even though they were on top of their game. I think that reiterates the point – take a break!

So I'll be taking a month off the bike but during the early winter months I'll sign up and do some cross country running races which helps with keeping motivated to train towards the end of the motocross season. It's also just another form of competition away from my usual competition. There are no negatives in my opinion and they're just a good craic and not too serious so it's worth looking some up in your area as there's plenty about.

If you live in a big town or city you should look at doing some parkrun.org.uk events. These are free to enter 5k running races that take place on a Saturday morning at 9am. So as the weather will probably write off any riding plans – if you're still keen to keep riding – it's worth getting online for your barcode and getting another form of racing under your belt and keep you on your toes so to speak. You may even see some fellow racers there like I do and as all results are kept online you can monitor your progress – who doesn't look online at their results and lap times?

Later on this month it'll be the International Dirt Bike Show which is always worth a visit although I'd prefer it to be a month later to tie in with my month off and bridge the gap nicely from the end of the season to Christmas.

I don't shut off from motocross completely

- that's impossible - I just don't ride my bike. Plus if you race ACU sanctioned events, you can strike a deal with one of the stands there for a few sets of roll-offs because from January 1 2016 tear offs will be banned! It was announced just over a year ago if you weren't aware...

Prior to the show we've got the aforementioned off-season supercross events taking part in the USA with the Red Bull Straight Rhythm followed by the Monster Energy Cup that'll fill up our social media feeds with riders in new gear, riders on new teams and returning riders.

The one they call James Stewart – because his name is James Stewart – returns for these events after a year on the couch thanks to his suspension for using a banned substance and as he hasn't been injured, I think he'll come out as crazy as a cut snake as he'll try to make up for a lost season over these two events so it'll be dramatic that's for sure!

So to wrap things up, give yourself a little time off and drink and eat what you want for a bit and when it's time to start riding again make sure that you've given your bike a good look over and grease everything up so it'll be good to go for the new season. Or November if you're really mad for it!

Junia Grove



MOTOCROSS HERITAGE SINCE 1976





AFTER BEING ON THE COMEBACK TRAIL FOR MOST OF THE SUMMER THE REVEREND IS FINALLY RACE READY....

i everyone, hope you're all good. I'd say a few of you will still be on an MXoN comedown. I won't be going this year, I've done enough watching in the last 18 months!

I'm finally fully fit! Bloody handy that with two weeks to go before the end of the season. Better late than never I guess and I'm hoping to be able to enjoy the last round of the British champs at FatCat and then it's a couple of weeks off with my stag do in there somewhere before I start cracking on for next year at the beginning of November.

I feel fresh as a daisy which is to be expected after doing frig all racing this year – wish we had a winter series or something! I won't be doing any AX so I guess my next race will be in NZ over Christmas or maybe the first weekend in January. I'm not sure yet, it all kinda depends when I get my deal done for 2016 over here before I can plan my winter over there.

I'm getting closer to being sorted which is good. Gives me a big boost of motivation for everything right now. As I'm sure some of you could tell I've been very down for quite some time so it's nice to be finally back to full training and doing some riding and planning ahead.

Tom Pattison, one of our local club riders, unfortunately passed away while racing last month. It has hit us all very hard locally as I'm sure it does everyone of you when you read news like that. I knew Tom through Shaun Southgate, one of my mates who races British champs. I had met him a few times and had a yarn with him and his wife at the Norfolk and

Suffolk presentation evening last year.

He was a top bloke who will be missed by many which was proved when Shaun and his mates organised a ride day in his memory at a local hotspot called Blythburgh. I've never seen so many people there which was amazing. We had a minute's silence and then a parade lap at midday with 180 bikes cruising around and I think every rider can say that Tom was fixed on their minds – he certainly was for me. Afterwards we pinned it all afternoon until the flag came out.

Hats off to Shaun and the boys for making it happen, to Gazza Lee for getting the track good after so much rain and to everyone that turned up.

A couple of mates came over later and we had a few beers and watched the USGP. I was pretty sour watching that – it's one of my favourite tracks and I always enjoy the trip to the US. There's something about racing there that gets you buzzing – I guess it's the fact that we all grew up watching the videos from there.

From the age of about five I watched all the Motovision videos and half would be GPs and half AMA. Places like Glen Helen were always on there so I had vivid dreams of racing those places. I did quite decent at Glen Helen in 2010 but missed '11 with an ankle injury so I couldn't wait to get back.

Anyway, the races were entertaining and Febvre saved the show for the Euros. It was nice to see him put one over on the Yanks. Grant was bloody quick but, as I explained to the boys, Glen Helen is like the Lommel of the

US – not condition wise but it's the mid-week spot and those boys do all their testing there as it's the roughest track about – so I wasn't surprised they did well.

The track didn't look very rough to be honest, just hard and edgy. I spoke to BT101 this week and he said the track wasn't as deep as in the past and he couldn't believe how bad the watering was – I said that it looked like a grand job of watering compared to most GPs!

I may be able to shed some light on what I'm doing for next season soon but for now let's finish this year and see what happens. I really wanted to race the last MX National at Canada Heights but I'm focused on being 100 per cent right now and I wasn't coming into that.

My back is now good. It still niggles every now and then but that's to be expected and on the bike I feel good again so we'll see.

Thanks for reading...

J. Markey



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omain Febvre is without doubt the greatest revelation of 2015! He was the most consistent rider and also the fastest, winning 15 motos including an impressive race win and overall at Glen Helen where he had to grind down Josh Grant and Cooper Webb in the dying stages of the first moto.

That race-winning pass in moto one on Webb along with his heroic ride in Maggiora with a crash-damaged bike sums up the Frenchman's determination and commitment to being the world number one. He earned it.

In MX2 Pauls Jonass eventually lost the war for the MX2 world title to Honda's Tim Gajser. Unfortunately for Jonass, while he was already on the back foot with Gajser's late season run at the title he used up another of his lives when he ejected from the bike mid-flight in Mexico.

Gajser's title brought an end to the Honda drought. The Japanese giant had been getting its ass kicked by Austria for years and hadn't won a title since Fred Bolley doubled up on a 250 smoker in '99 and '00. The last time it won the small bike championship was with Alex Puzar in 1995!

Simmo has had a great season, hitting many

career milestones along the way. It ended on a bum note when he was victim of a first race, first corner crash at Glen Helen but he still retained fourth place in the standings as nearest rival Max Nagl had a double DNF.

Nathan Watson wasn't present at the final two fly-away rounds but is coming back to form after injury with a couple of strong end-of-season performances. Quiet for much of the year in his first season abroad, Watson won the fourth round of the German ADAC championship and later a round of the Dutch championship.

His younger brother Ben has confirmed he'll be back with the Hitachi Revo team for another term but I've heard on the grapevine that Roger Magee's outfit may be riding a slightly different brand.

Back on home soil and champions have been crowned and the domestic scene is swinging like a sinful suburban semi with people swapping rides, reigniting old romances and even leaving long-term relationships for the excitement of a new fling under the sheets of a different awning for 2016.

Kristian Whatley wrapped up two championships in one week, lifting the Pirelli

British Masters MX1 and Michelin MX Nationals MX1 titles. The Pro MX2 equivalents went home to Scotland and France as it was I who won the British Masters on my Pendrich Kawi and Steven Lenoir took the MX Nationals for Dyer & Butler KTM.

Lenoir is moving up to MX1 next season with Dyer & Butler on a 350 KTM. After wrapping up the MX Nationals a round early he rode his 350 at the final round at Canada Heights where he mixed it up with the old guard and finished second overall behind Whatley and in front of Graeme Irwin.

Talking of Irwin, he's leaving Heads & All Threads Suzuki and will join Whatley and Lewis Trickett at Buildbase Honda. Irwin's transfer left a hole in Suzuki's structure that was immediately filled by Josh Spinks. That kid Spinks is a relatively unsung hero but has put in some impressive rides this year and more than a few times this season has looked comfortable inside the top six. Under the other half of the Heads & All Threads awning will be the team's current fill-in rider, the bear hunter Nev Bradshaw.

Nev is gonna come back to dirt bikes full-time after a season of trying to fly solo



RALLY PODIUM FOR SUNDERLAND SAM THIRD AT ATACAMA RALLY

KTM's Sam Sunderland completed a strong ride in the Chilean Atacama Rally to place third overall. Competing as part of his preparation for the Dakar Rally, the Brit ended the five-stage race in a fine third. Second on the final stage, Sunderland's result ensured a 1-2-3 for KTM with team-mates Pablo (Quintanilla and Matthias Walkner finishing first and second.

WIN!WIN!WIN!WIN!

FIVE PAIRS OF SHAUN SIMPSON'S SCOTT GOGGLES UP FOR GRABS

ST SHAUN SIMPSON PLACE UK MX1 CHAMPION



and steer his own ship which, unfortunately, forced him into early retirement. But you can't keep a good man down and Nev will be back for a full season on yellow in the MX2 class. Let the battles commence.

The man who currently resides in Irwin's new bed is Gert Krestinov. Gert has just won the Estonian championship and will move to the Phoenix Tools team next year which is returning to Honda machinery after just a year on Husgvarna.

I'm led to believe – but it easily could turn out to be bullsh*t – that Husqvarna is moving its MX1 effort to MVR-D with Tanel Leok spearheading the set-up. And the second MX2 rider to join Steve Clarke on the Apico Husky team is...myself aka Bryan MacKenzie. Yep, I'll be riding on the tour for another year but this time on the blue, white and yellow.

Surprisingly, Jake Nicholls is looking at an uncertain future. Jake's contract with Steve Turner's Wilvo Forkrent KTM team is up and after two years of injuries was informed that it won't be renewed. So Jake, who's making a comeback from a back injury dating back to his youth days, is considering a British championship-only deal for his immediate

future as a platform to rebuild his career to GPs. Currently he hasn't signed for anyone and is a free agent once the season ends.

Word has it that Emberson Yamaha is going to cease its pro team operation but carry on with the youth team. I've heard this rumour from far more than just one person but it's totally unfounded just now so if I'm wrong don't shoot the messenger. The Pendrich Kawasaki team that I currently ride for looks likely to close its doors and Steve James of LPE is rumoured to be focusing solely on indoor races next year with a pair of Frenchies.

If all of this is true that's a huge kick in the nuts to British motocross and will mean six potential seats on teams will be lost for next year. The word privateer will become increasingly commonplace inside the top 10.

September was mostly dominated by the mighty ISDE in Slovakia and the 90th edition of the race will be remembered for an awful lot of reasons. But diggin' on the positives here at DBR Towers we must first wish Jamie McCanney a massive congrats for his Enduro 1 class win.

The young Manxman delivered a crackin' ride during the week-long race so to see him >>

Shaun Simpson has had one hell of a year so far and to celebrate the Scot securing his third British championship title and fourth in the world his goggle sponsor Scott have given us five pairs of his signature goggle to give away.

To be in with a shot of winning all you have to do is head online to www.dirtbikerider.com, find our competitions page, answer a simple question, fill in a form and click send all before the closing date of October 29. The first five correct entries picked randomly after that will win a pair of the champ's peeper protectors...

WALKER LEADS THE WAY AT MEGAWATT JONNY WALKER KEEPS GRAND SLAM HOPES ALIVE



KTM's Jonny Walker kept his hard enduro grand slam hopes alive with victory at the Red Bull 111 Megawatt in Poland. Marking the penultimate round of the Red Bull series, Walker delivered a confident ride to comfortably led the field of 500 riders home at the Belchatow Coal Mine.

Second to Taddy Blazusiak in last year's race, Walker this time had to deal with a motivated Joakim Ljunggren (KTM) before he could secure the win. Swapping positions on the opening lap, Walker forced his way into the lead on lap two and pulled out a two-minute buffer over the Swede.

Looking assured of the runner-up result, Ljunggren's race unravelled on the final climb. Stuck within sight of the finish line, Ljunggren lost out when Graham Jarvis calmly rode around the KTM rider to snatch second in the dying moments.





come away with a class win and fifth overall in the biggest enduro race of the year fills us with immense pride. It's been 10 years since David Knight gave Britain a win at the ISDE so to see it happen again – and by another Manxman – is pretty damn cool. Let's hope he can continue riding this wave of momentum and claim the Enduro Junior world title at the final round of the season in France in a couple of weeks time.

It was great to see Knighter back at the ISDE. After a steady opening two days he found his groove as the week progressed. Pulling off a few outright test wins in the process, he ended his week a solid seventh in Enduro 2. With Tom Sagar and Jamie Lewis also placing top 20 in E2 and Jack Rowland 12th in E3 the boys were rewarded with fifth in the Trophy team competition.

Not to be outdone, the Junior squad of Lee Sealey, Josh Gotts, Rob Johnson and James Dent also took fifth overall. With plans already in place for Spain 2016 all that's needed is to see a British women's team get in the mix. We

reckon it's about time that happened.

With the Dakar Rally just three months away the route has finally been decided. With host countries getting juggled around, ASO announced the rally will tackle just Argentina and Bolivia. Starting in Buenos Aires on January 2, the route loops up through Bolivia before sweeping back down to Argentina and ending in Rosario on January 16. Even with the reduced number of countries the race will still total a whopping 9000km.

The Edmondson Racing ACU British Enduro Championship took riders to the bottomless sandy tracks of the Natterjack for the penultimate round of the series. At the head of the field it looks like the battle for overall honours will go right down to the wire between Jamie McCanney and Steve Holcombe.

A double win by Holcombe nudged his Beta in front but McCanney – who had an eventful race after colliding with a sidecar – still has the final round at the Muntjac in November to turn things around.



SHOW TIME!

MAKE AN INTERNATIONAL DIRT BIKE DATE

It's just a matter of weeks until the 2015 International Dirt Bike Show opens its doors at Stoneleigh Park. The show kicks off at 9.30am on October 29 and runs flat-out right through to 5pm on November 1.

Honda, Husqvarna, Kawasaki, KTM, Suzuki and Yamaha line up alongside trials and enduro specialists Beta and Sherco in the main exhibition hall with Bultaco, Fantic, Mecatecno, Rieju, TM and Vertigo in hall three.

Couple this line-up with displays from the major distributors from the worlds of clothing, parts, accessories, gadgets, tyres and lubricants along with race trucks and trailers and all the main sporting associations.

And don't forget that DBR will be sited stage centre with a hot new issues of the UK's finest off-road publication plus calendars and other merchandise. TMX will be alongside us n'all as it gear up for its 2000th edition. As a special treat there will be some red hot machinery to show off including some championship winning specials.

On-stage entertainment will be hosted by Jack Burnicle with live action in halls four and five with arena trials, Danny Butler's MTB spectacular, Minibike Supercross and the have-a-go Electric Zone. For younger visitors there's My First Honda Licence, Strider Bikes and Kids Quads.

Following its popularity last year the amazing Wall

of Death also makes a welcome return.

A comprehensive display of classic MXdN bikes will be on show as will twin-shocks bikes covering the late seventies and early eighties. Kawasaki will also exhibit a blast from the past with a late '80s KX250 and the new Africa Twin will grace the Honda stand and adventure bike zone area.

In a free-to-enter prize draw, one lucky show fan will win a stunning Honda CRF250R worth over £6,600. Visitors can enter at the show or online at www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk. There's also the chance to win a taster session at multiple AMCA and IMBA champion Lee Dunham's training school.

It's a safe bet that you can expect to bump into quite a few off-road sporting stars with visits expected – but not confirmed – from Shaun Simpson, Max Anstie, Tommy Searle, Jonny Walker, Kristian Whatley, Graeme Irwin, Nev Bradshaw, Brad Anderson, Martin Barr and Gert Krestinov.

There are savings to be made by buying in advance. Adult admission is $\mathfrak L8$ in advance for the opening day and $\mathfrak L13$ for Friday through to Sunday. On-the-door prices are $\mathfrak L10$ for Thursday and $\mathfrak L16$ for the other three days. Over 60s and 11-15s can visit the show on any day for just $\mathfrak L8$ with an advance ticket and children aged 10 and under go free. For every 10 adult tickets bought together in advance the 11th is free.



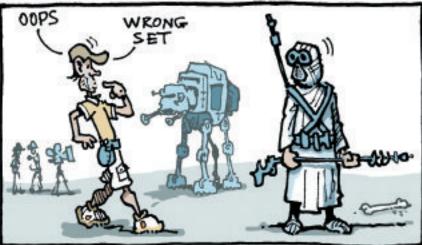




A bunch of Australian motocrossers were contracted as stunt riders for MAD MAX desert scenes in Namibia





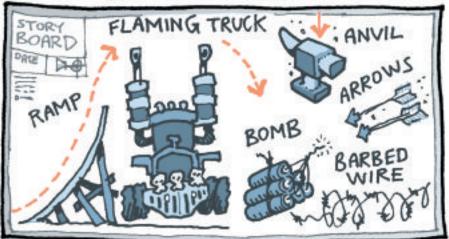


Body armour was limited, as compared to protection normally used in competition conditions.

Some stunts were quite dangerous, and riders negotiated the use of better protection for certain scenes.



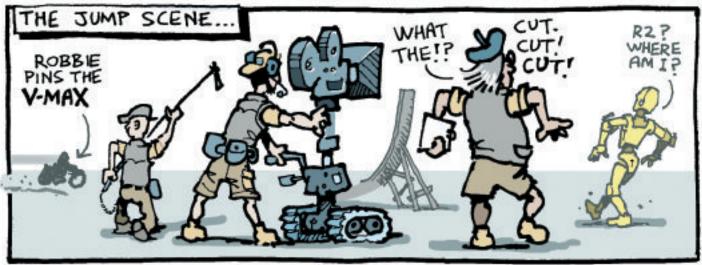




























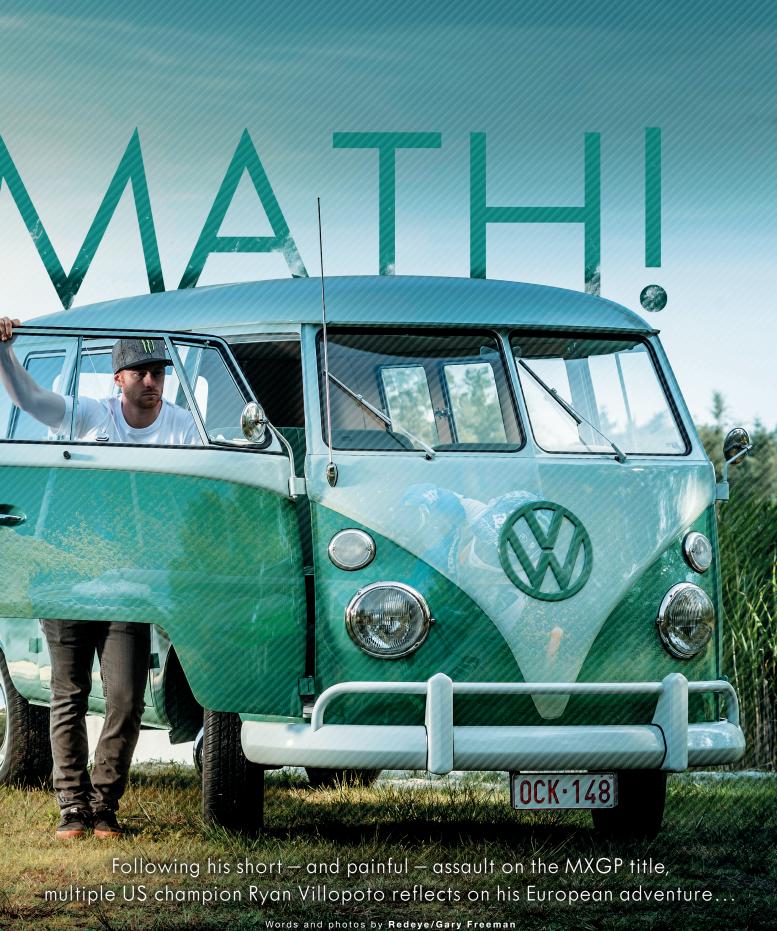


performance from passion









dirtbikeriden, 35





yan Villopoto is considered to be one of the greatest racers ever and he's earned that reputation the hard way. Over the years Villopoto has gone bar-to-bar against and beaten some astonishingly talented opposition including James Stewart, Chad Reed and Ryan Dungey as well as a plethora of emerging stars – Trey Canard, Justin Barcia, Ken Roczen and plenty more

All of which makes his frankly bizarre crash at the Grand Prix of Trentino even more astonishing – it was a seemingly rookie mistake from one of the sport's very best.

It's all over the internet if you fancy re-watching but in essence Ryan's get-off was a classic 'loop-out' leaving him on the deck and clearly in a lot of pain. Should he have backed off and let Desalle through? In hindsight probably but in the heat of battle many would have done the same

"That crash was definitely weird," recalls Ryan. "It went wrong so quickly and I don't remember exactly what happened. Obviously I was in the midst of a battle and clearly made a mistake. I remember landing off that single jump and the suspension compressed on landing then recoiled. Everything happened like a 'perfect storm' and I wasn't ready for it. Before I knew it, it was over and I was upside down. When I got up I was in some pain and it knocked the wind out of me and made my whole lower area hurt pretty badly."

Right after the crash Ryan made a fast exit, heading back across the Atlantic to an environment and circle of friends, acquaintances and professionals that he trusted

While he received detailed analysis of his injuries and thought long and hard about his next move the internet, press rooms and journalists went into speculation overdrive. From a bystander's point of view it looked bad to read headlines like 'Where is Ryan Villopoto?' and rumour had it no-one could get hold of him.

"The injury I sustained was a broken tailbone [coccyx] which goes up into my lower back," he explained. "I broke it in four places so that took a while to heal and after some time it was still giving me problems. There was also soft tissue damage around the L4 and L5 vertebrae so we did tissue work with a chiropractor and obviously gave it time to heal.

"Even now if I sit on a hard chair or sit for a while and get up I can feel the effects and they said that would last a year. It is what is and we did what we could but in the end it wasn't going to be enough. I was off the bike for some time and to come back

and race at this level I needed a longer time to train.

"Yes it did go quiet for while but we were trying to figure out where things were and how much time would be left in the season if I returned. The window was closing and after a while, together with my trainer Aldon Baker and everyone else involved, we made a decision.

"It wasn't as quick as people would have liked but there are a lot of people involved. I had to go to my personal major sponsors individually and talk with them about a major decision like that but I'm happy with the decision I made. I said before the season started that this would be my last go at racing win or lose.

"It didn't end up as we all would have liked it but it was a good experience while it lasted. I've had knee surgery three times but with an injury >>>









like the one I had it was going to take me some time to come back. People will think and say what they're gonna say and that's fine. Nobody was living it except for me and you're never going to keep everybody happy."

going to keep everybody happy."

So with a massive dose of disappointment the motocross world had to accept that the clash between the most successful motocross racer in recent US history and the rest of Europe was over. But looking back at the challenges Ryan faced was he really going be world champion in 2015? New team, new bike, new tracks, new countries and new cultures – was he really that good to be able to overcome the changes to his routine and still win?

"Yeah it was different," explains Ryan.
"Living here and travelling to the first couple of overseas races was different. In fact everything about it was different. Not one single thing was the killer but it was just a combination of

"Over here though we were like 'sh't we gotta drive six hours to France because it's raining here' or 'we've gotta go find a hard-packed track' so it was very different from week to week to week. It was never routine but that's part of the game over here and the riders are used to that.

used to that.

"Looking back to bike set-up we knew it was going to be a big undertaking. I don't think anybody knew on our side that it was going to be so different. For example, in the States we have massive braking bumps coming into the turns and you guys have massive acceleration bumps coming out of the turns – so it's flip-flopped. Sure you have some braking bumps but most of the big stuff you set your bike up for is acceleration bumps.

"Yes, the tracks are rough all over but there are more choppy bumps in Europe. It's a totally

different bike set-up for sure. It was also tough fitting into a new team because I'd only been with two teams in my whole career. I rode for Mitch Payton on a Lites team but it was only that Lites team and I was there for my whole Lites career and then on the Factory Kawasaki team for my whole 450 career. So being that I was only in two teams for my whole career made coming to a different team a learning curve all in itself."

When the gate dropped for the first GP in Qatar RV was left on the start line with a stalled engine. This left him with a heck of a challenge to hack his way through a fast disappearing pack. After a small crash Ryan eventually finished the race in ninth – just under a minute behind eventual winner Max Nagl. He finished race two in eighth which gave him seventh overall but he was already a full moto's points adrift of series leader Nagl going into the









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second GP in Thailand. Bizarrely, that second GP was an almost totally different story as RV won the overall with a 1-3 result.

"We know that Qatar didn't go as planned but there are races in the States that didn't go as planned. I didn't plan on crashing in Seattle and tearing my ACL - nothing is planned. It is what it is and things happen. I won in Thailand and I was adjusting to the two-day format and I probably could have done some things differently for the second moto.

"I've raced in hotter conditions but I've been used to it - what I mean is that most of us arrived in Qatar and Thailand from Europe where we were still riding in sweatshirts so it's the shock factor going from one temperature to another that's tough. I've trained, raced and won in hotter conditions but again I've been used to it.

"I've been beaten at a lot of different places and won a lot of championships and you're never going to win every race. Losing is a part of the game as well as winning. The year didn't turn out like we would have liked it to and it looks like that for many of the top guys but that's just the way it is. At first it's a big bummer but you get over it. As a racer there are always ups and downs, valleys and peaks. You ride the wave when it's bitchin' and when it's no good you make do.

"Looking back at my GP racing I don't regret being beaten at this or that race - in fact I won the second GP of the season so although I only had a short go at it I think I faired well. If anyone thinks otherwise then flip the situation and go to the US and race.

"The GP guys aren't any better than we are in the States and we're not any better than the GP guys. It's just a different lifestyle and racing style and the tracks develop differently. We can take any one of these Euro guys and most of them probably wouldn't make a few laps around a supercross track. It's just that different. Not any one person is better than another. You might have a few French riders who ride supercross better than most but the bottom line

is there's not a whole lot of Euros that head that way because it's tough, difficult and different. And vice versa - there aren't many Americans who come this way."

Even now it's still hard to believe that at the age of 27 RV has retired and the dream of seeing him over in Europe trading blows with the top GP guys is a tough one to let go of. It's like a great hyped action movie ending before the first car chase. The regret of what might have been is a bitter pill to swallow but let's give the fella a break. He's human after all and clearly wants to quit while still fit and live the rest of his life in relative peace with the financial security that a successful racing career has brought.

"There's a whole lot more to life than living on the road and doing this. I set goals and I've reached them and made enough money to be able to stop so I want to quit while I'm ahead. I can look back and see what I've done and the sport's been really good to me but motorcycles are something I do - or did - but that's not my>>



STATUS?

RV ON MC, RC AND JS...

So the curtain's closed on RV's superb career but how will he be viewed in the sport's history? Has he done enough to stack up again the mighty Ricky Carmichael or supercross legend Jeremy McGrath and does he care?

I always looked up to McGrath. He was the guy. I'd go to supercross races as a kid

consider Ricky as the GOAT. He was one of the greatest of all time and McGrath the same. Great in their own way, in slightly different eras and so on. Ricky was amazing at outdoors and one of the best guys ever but as a whole if you can do anything like MC or Ricky's done these are huge accomplishments in themselves. How RC or McGrath rate me I don't know. I don't want to say I don't care but everyone has their own opinions. Some people like me, some people don't and were never a fan of me but that's the way it's gotta be.

What about James Stewart? Clearly one of the fastest of all time but perhaps an unfulfilled

"James Stewart I dunno. That's a question that journalists ask - unfulfilled this or that. Okay, well why don't you put the shoes or boots on the other foot. Why aren't you doing it? Because you can't. It's just a bummer to see someone call somebody out that can barely ride down the road or can't even make a lap around Lommel. I get it, he could probably be the best if he put his head down to it and did what he had to do but that's the way it goes. That's what makes different riders great at different times. I think anybody who wants to call anybody out that's at our level - well. why don't you go do it and then see how it is?"

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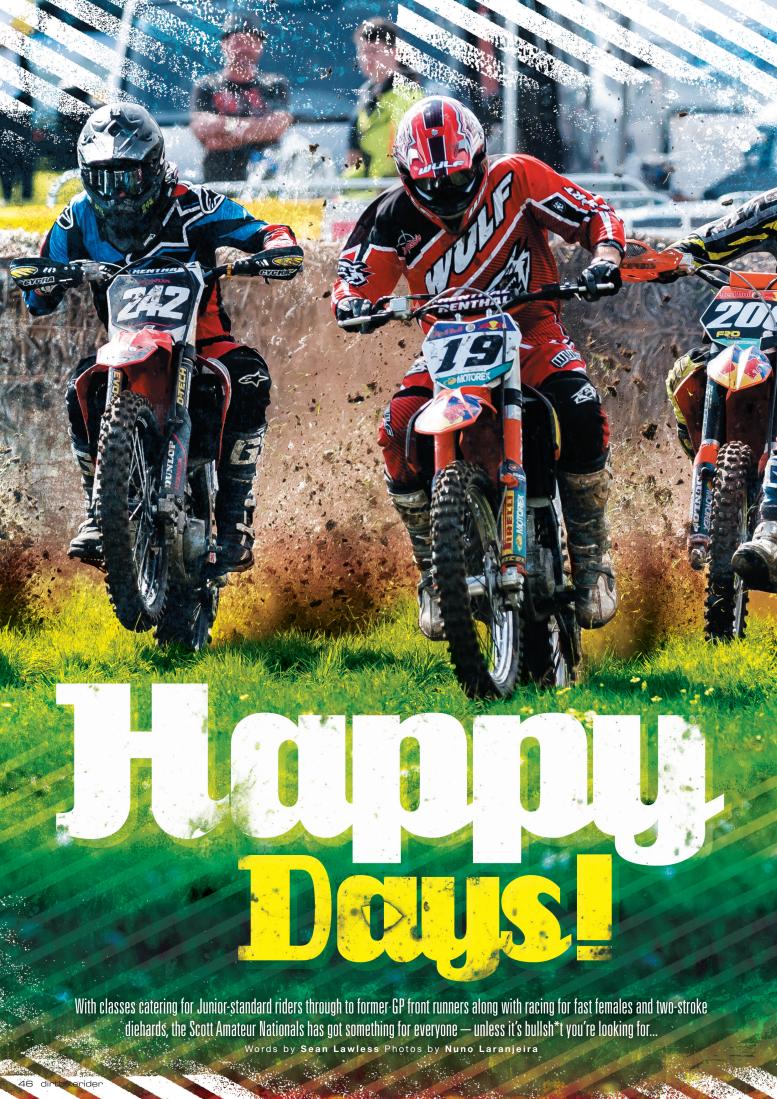
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'appy days! Two words you hear a lot at a round of the Scott Amateur Nationals. Okay, so they're mostly spoken by Darren Hudson – the driving force behind series promoter CT Events – but his easy-going, good-natured approach to running his meetings permeates the entire paddock

permeates the entire paddock.

It's a genuinely grassroots national championship and while other more high-profile series have come and gone the Scott Nats has grown year-on-year with riders attracted by the mixture of top-class tracks and Darren's zero tolerance of bullsh*t.

A former national twin-shock champion who was forced to retire from racing after breaking his neck playing professional rugby league, Darren started the series five years ago.

"I wanted to make a championship that I would enjoy if I was still riding," he said, "and I love it! It's a real family job for me. My daughter Chloe's secretary, does the timing and all that carry on. My missus Heather does all the secretarial work, entries and everything. It's my way of keeping a connection with motocross because I don't race any more."

One of the hardest working men in motocross, the Cumbrian builder spends so much time trackside during the season you don't need a calendar to work out what month it is – just a Cuprinol stain chart to gauge his tan. City Stone means it's March, Golden Oak is May and by the time late August rolls around he's a fetching shade of American Mahogany!

Although the series has only been running for five years the 50-year-old's experience stretches much further back – both on and off the track – which is a big plus when it comes to promoting a major championship.

"I can see both sides of it – as a rider and as an event organiser. We've been running events for, I think, 17 years. Set off once a year with the twin-shocks and now it's just snowballed into something like 23 race days a year.

"The Scott Nationals is something that's developed from bringing the twin-shock atmosphere into modern bike racing and the riders are loving it. Registrations have grown every year and the quality of rider is absolutely brilliant. It's outstanding for amateur motocross."

Twin-shock events are famed – notorious even – for their social side and at a Scott Nat at night you'll find a busy beer tent and live music. It's

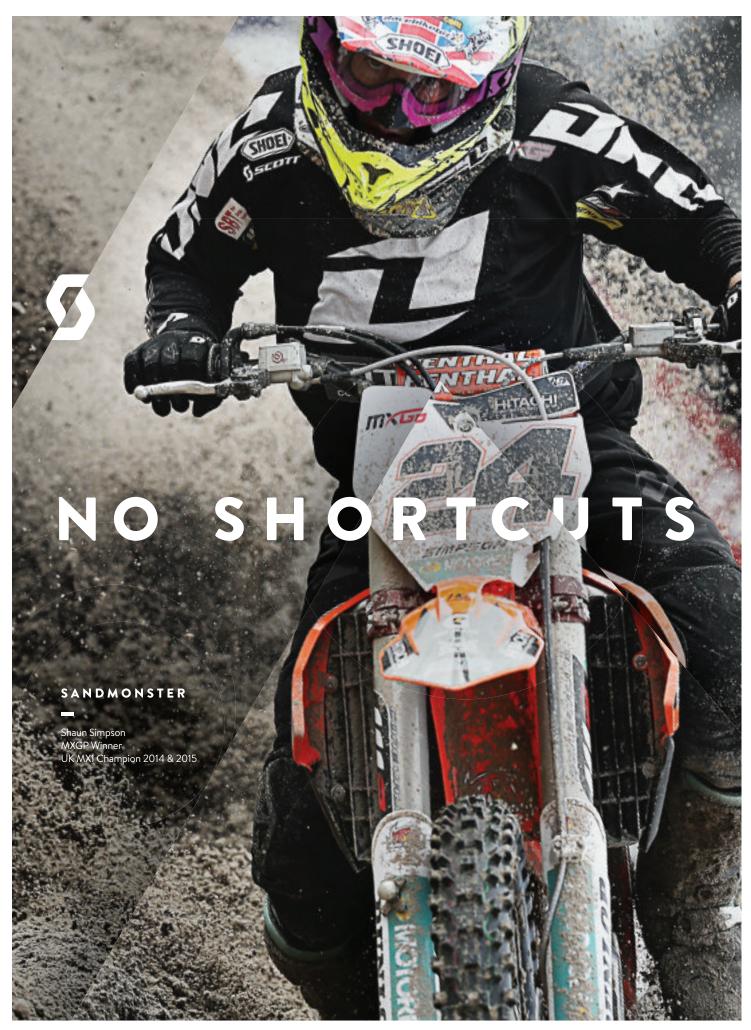
a proper club atmosphere only on a national stage and when the bike racing finishes for the day the bench racing kicks off.

The eight-round 2015 series has called in at some of the country's premier tracks. FatCat, Preston Docks, Dean Moor, Hawkstone Park and Pontrilas are all regulars on the national circuit. Throw in the iconic Farleigh Castle, old-school Warmingham Lane and man-made Mildenhall and the list of venues is impressive – especially for a championship with 'amateur' status.

"The good thing this year is that everyone's inviting us back to the same venues – we don't have to apply – so we must be doing something right. And we're looking at a couple of new tracks for next year and hopefully a trip to Ireland."

It's a tough job juggling event promotion with his bread and butter building business but, fortunately, Darren's got very understanding customers.

"I'm lucky with where we live because it's a close-knit community and they wait for you so I still get to work Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday most weeks. End of March we're on the motocross, come the end of October;









and - bang! - we're at work building.

"You've got to go to work because you'll never, ever make a living out of this job. You just won't and if I had a mortgage it would be different and there would be more rules with late entries and things but as long as it wipes its own feet I'm not bothered."

Darren refers to the team behind the series as the "Scott Nationals family" and that description extends far beyond his daughter Chloe and partner Heather.

"Richard Sharples is my right hand man – I couldn't do it without him. He doesn't say that much and is deaf but the boy can knock posts in and I don't know how I got on without lan and Margaret Matthias in the past. They sort all the marshals for the events – nearly all the same marshals do all our rounds now – and even wash the flags. Ian is a fantastic asset on the day – so professional in everything he does.

"Assistant clerk of the course is Gary Crossley. He can do anything and has got everything and if he hasn't got it he knows someone who has and Rob Kinsey's got to be the best commentator out there. His knowledge of the sport and the interviews with riders on the day makes for an entertaining event.

"I have worked with Terry Roberts and his medical crew for over 15 years now and they are the best there is. I can't thank them enough and I know the riders appreciate them being at all our events. And Alan and Elaine Eaves have been racing and supporting our events for more years than Alan will care to remember and they are always there with the take down and litter picking at the end of every event – both are a massive help to the Scott Nationals."

No matter how solid the organising team is, a motocross series is only as good as the on-track action and Darren is confident that the racing is as good – if not better – than anything you'll see anywhere else.

"The riders make this championship what it is. They're a fantastic bunch. They don't need to be the fastest in the country – racing is about passing, about close rivalries. It's also about arses on bikes and having a good time and we must be doing something right because they keep coming back.

"The Scott Nationals is one big family of riders and event organisers all going in the same direction – and it's working."

David Campbell Veteran

A former British championship and GP rider, David Campbell is one of the most experienced racers in the country. The 43-year-old Scot lives in Kettering and drives wagons for a living.

"I love the relaxed atmosphere and racing

against guys I raced with 20 years ago in the British championship. We've still got that competitive edge and are always trying to beat each other which has never changed although it's a bit more mellow now – not as serious as it used to be.

"I like the tracks we visit with the series and they're all prepared to the same standard as they would be for the British championship. It's not as if you turn up and they're not set up – they're always perfect for the day's racing."





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James Lassu

Winner of the MX1 title with one round to spare, J2 GFX company owner James Lassu's life revolves around racing. The 26-year-old from Barnsley has seen previous championship challenges blunted by injury but this time around he's managed to stay healthy while his rivals have suffered.

"It's a good series. It's always nice and chilled out and you can come here and have a lot of fun. You haven't got a lot of pressure on your shoulders so you can obviously enjoy it more. I like the way Darren runs it and there are some good tracks.

"I've done the series for three years and every year I've had an injury that's stopped me from winning a championship with them so this season I've just got my head down and tried to get a full series under my belt. It's good for riders like myself who are working full-time. You can just turn up, get your bike out and just ride and enjoy it. With some other series you've got to be training through the week, riding twice a week.

"All I've done all my life is motocross and the Scott Nationals is a great way of keeping in the game. I think I'll still be riding with them in the Veterans when I'm an old man."

Brian Wheeler-

Veteral

The country's fastest over 40, former British championship and 500GP contender Brian Wheeler is the dominant force in the Vets division of the Scott Amateur Nationals. This season the 46-year-old Gloucestershire taxi driver has lost just one race he's started – because of a puncture – and has won an impressive 34 motos.

"It's just proper get-out-there-and-go-racing stuff. It's run professionally, it's a good bit of fun and there isn't all the politics with it. It's about 'let's get on the line and have a race boys'. And when it's all done you go and sit alongside the bloke you've just put out the side of the track and have a laugh about it because they'd do the same back if given the opportunity. It's a bit of fun and if someone dives inside someone else it's no bother and that's what racing's all about.

"The tracks are all good tracks, they're all prepared great and you know you're going to get a good day's racing. With the majority of tracks the Scotts use there are two or three lines all the way round so if you can't get by the person in front of you it's because you're slower.

"Darren knows the score. He's raced himself and knows what you should water and what you shouldn't water – the majority of the time that is – and what you should smooth out and what you shouldn't smooth out."









Lewis Meadows ----

MX2

Lewis Meadows sewed up the MX2 title at the penultimate round after Bradley Wheeler, the only rider within striking distance of him, opted for early surgery on a knee injury. That's not to take anything away from the 23-year-old plumber from Chesterfield – he's led the series from the start and has won more motos than anyone else.

"It's all about the atmosphere. There's not the pressure you get with every other national you go to and Darren and Chloe run a very good meeting. There's no fighting, there's no mardiness, they're just good meetings.

"I did the Red Bull Pro Nationals in 2010 and the year before that I did the BYMX. This year I'm also competing in the AMCA championship but I missed a round because it clashed with the Scott Nationals which is my priority but I'm still eighth or ninth."





Alex Rach

Alex Rach is another former British championship regular who gets his racing fix in the Scott Nationals. The 34-year-old from Derbyshire is hard to miss when he's bashing bars with the 450Fs on his distinctive two-stroke TM and although he's a threat every time he lines up behind the gate missing a handful of rounds mid-season has dropped him out of contention.

"The series is so relaxed, Darren's easy to get on with, there are no stupid rules and everyone has fun. When I was 28 I'd literally had enough of motocross, I took a year out and then this started and I've not looked back. I want to keep going as long as I can and I think when I start to get too slow for MX1 I'll maybe move to the Veterans class."

RNRMMX

Open Juniors

The RNRMMXT – that's the Royal Navy Royal Marines Motocross Team – are an enthusiastic bunch of servicemen who run their own series within the Open Junior class at the Scott Amateur Nations complete with a separate scoring system.

We chatted to Petty Office Rob Morton who, when he's not stretching his throttle cable, can be found working as a Royal Navy aircraft engineer specialising in Merlin Mk2 helicopters

"We're a mixture between the Royal Marines and the Royal Navy and we're based throughout the country so we chose the Scott Nationals because it travels around which makes it fair for everyone. The series is really well organised and Chloe and Darren are top people who've sorted us out. It's a family weekend for us and we try to get everyone involved."







Stacey Fisher —

With all due respect to the other fast females of the Scott Nationals, the quickest by far is 22-year-old Stacey Fisher from Leigh near Manchester. The engineer is pretty much a guaranteed winner of every race she enters – when she keeps it rubberside down – but having missed a round to race the WMX class at the French MXGP she currently sits third in the points.

Stacey's raced four rounds of the women's world championship this season with her best result an 18th in the second moto in Czecho and she plans to do the full series next year. She's also a big fan of the Scott Nationals...

"I like the way the series is run and the stuff Darren puts on at night. Everyone seems so close, it's like a big family. All my friends ride here too."



54 dirtbikerider

Ty Kellett Open Two-stroke

West Country weapon Ty Kellett is probably better known as a talented videographer than a racer but on track he's fast and spectacular and the 22-year-old is the man to beat in the Open Two-stroke class.

"I love the Scott Nationals because of the really nice family atmosphere – everybody are so chilled out. It's kinda like a club event on steroids and there a little bit here for everyone. There's some really quick racing but there's also the Junior group which is a good level for people to start in but at the end of the day they're doing a national series. It's absolutely brilliant we get to ride the big tracks and everyone's stoked to be here."





Cheers m'dears Scott Nats sponsors

Every series needs backing and the Scott Nationals is lucky to benefit from some great support, although more class sponsors are needed for 2016.

Here's a run down of the companies that make it all possible...

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The annual international team bash goes off in Kosice where there's more than a little controversy...

Words and photos by Future7Media

ar from predictable, this year's ISDE in Slovakia will long be remembered in a lot of ways. At the end of an eventful week, France was declared winners of the World Trophy team competition. But it's a win that has been clouded in controversy.

Following the overruling of an FIM jury decision, France has provisionally ended the event on the top step of the podium while runners up Australia refused to accept the result.

After what began as cracking opening couple of days action, things quickly became heated when on day three eight World Trophy team riders were excluded for missing an intermediate checkpoint on the opening lap. That passing ban initially ruled out France, USA and Great Britain out of the race while dropping Italy and Spain down to five riders.

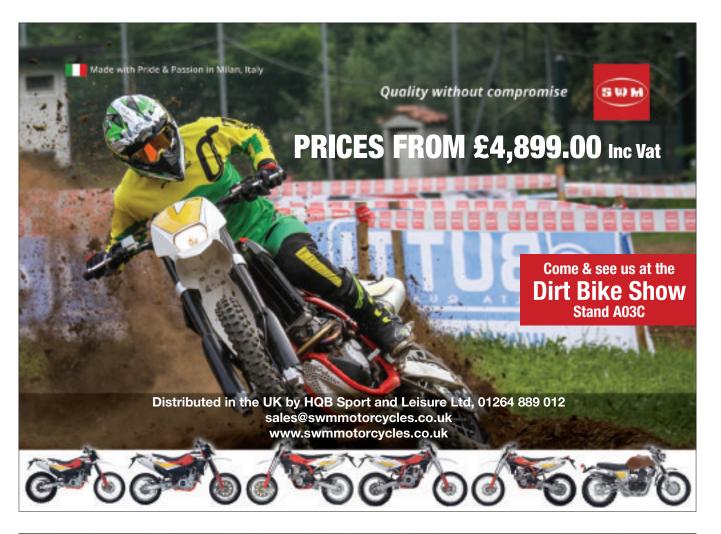
But on immediate appeal, the affected riders were allowed to continue their race albeit being temporally

excluded from the results. Then at the end of day five, the FIM overturned the initial jury decision and provisionally reinstated everyone back into the game. Having held a 15-minute lead, Australia now found themselves trailing France by two minutes with day six remaining. Naturally they were upset. Unable to recover, Australia lost out and France won while Spain hung onto third.

In the Junior World Trophy ranks the winners were unanimous. Australia won. Leading from the off, the Aussies hardly put a foot wrong throughout the week and claimed a much deserved win over Sweden and Italy.

Making it three wins on the bounce, Australia also brought home the Women's World Trophy. Outclassing their rivals, the trio of Tayla Jones, Jemma Wilson and Jessica Gardiner ran away with proceedings to secure a huge 55-minute margin of victory over France and Sweden.











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Team America

So close for the Yanks as Ryan Sipes takes overall win. . .

USA entered Slovakia chasing their debut ISDE victory and they left with that elusive victory eluding them once again. Based solely on the team's results it was another case of close but no cigar. But the bigger picture in Košice told a different story. Collectively USA achieved a lot and once they get those final pieces of the ISDE puzzle together they will win it.

Starting strong, USA led day one but on day three Kailub Russell was the

first to exit. A blown knee and a trashed KTM cut his week short. Taylor Robert got caught up in the missed checkpoint

storm but it was Thad Duvall grinding to a halt on day four that ultimately knocked them out of contention.

But Ryan Sipes became USA's unlikely

shining light – their new off-road hero, in fact. Stepping up to the plate in his debut Trophy team ride, the former supercross racer went on to win the event outright. A far cry from the blinding stadium lights, Sipes looked incredibly comfortable and at ease on the snotty, Slovakian forestry tests. By winning the event outright, Sipes became the first American to do so in the history of the ISDE...

"That was my first ISDE as a member of USA's World Trophy Team and it was a huge honour to be picked," told Sipes. "We had a strong team this year. We wanted everybody to finish good but loosing two of our guys was a bummer. I think winning the overall was something like a consolation prize for all of us.

"I had a good start winning the first special tests and then it went down like a roller-coaster. After day three I was leading the overall and started to build confidence. On day five there was a little bit of pressure and I was subconsciously riding a bit conservative. I just wanted to be safe and preserve my lead and it worked out."



James Dent

"It's been a brilliant experience to represent Great Britain on the Junior team. I've loved every minute. It was a tough week — at times harder than I sort of expected it to be — but the trick was to keep plugging away. Fifth overall but also to be not far off the podium is pretty cool. We've done well."

Best of British!

Cracking E1 class win for Jamie McCanney

It may be 10 years since Britain last won a class in the ISDE but with Jamie McCanney picking up his first in Slovakia the future is in good hands. Competing at the sharp end of the Enduro 1 class, McCanney led home a stacked field of riders to take the win.

Riding with poise and maturity (and mindful of the fact that he had a world title to fight for only weeks after the ISDE) the Manxman quietly chipped away for the 250F class win. With Kailub Russell exploding out of the blocks

to win day one, Jamie placed second to him. Then when Russell exploded out of the race, McCanney gladly inherited the race lead and made it his own for the remainder of the week. Capping off his week with fifth overall in the outright standings, ISDE 2015 was one to remember for the Husqvarna rider.

"It's been a great six days of racing so to come away with the class win and fifth overall is beyond my expectations leading into the race," confirmed McCanney. "I worked my best to help the team but obviously I've also got other things going on at the moment as I'm also leading the Enduro Junior World Championship. I tried to do my part for the team but I also had to look after myself. You have to try and ride

within your limits while also pushing for a good result.

"I've only had one bad day and that was day four. I had two crashes and that's all I've done through the week. I tried to ride it steady away. I preferred the start of the week than the end. I got into a good rhythm straight away. I think the conditions at the end of the week favoured bigger bikes. My bike was absolutely spot-on till the end. I stayed on the same brake pads and everything. I changed a front sprocket at the end just to be safe and not miss a beat. The going was pretty brutal most of the days, not that much difficult as physical going through constant impact. But that's enduro at the end of the day, it was good."



Great British!

Battling Brits take a solid fifth in Slovakia

Overall Great Britain enjoyed a solid week in Slovakia. On the World Trophy front, finishing fifth place in a highly stacked field of riders was a result well worth celebrating. With USA, Australia and France grabbing the majority of the limelight entering the event, Britain quietly went about their business. Overcoming an

early blow when rookie Joe Wootton crashed and broke his leg on the opening special test, the rest of the guys kept on pushing.

Spurred on by the efforts of Jamie McCanney, David Knight, Tom Sagar, Jamie Lewis and Jack Rowland all rose to the occasion. Once settled into proceedings, Knight and Sagar began to rise through the ranks during the second half of the week. With all five riders ending with gold medals, Britain had a lot to be pleased about.

Making their start on the Junior World Trophy team for the first time Lee Sealey, James Dent, Rob Johnson and Joss Gotts acquitted themselves well for fifth overall.

Digging deeper into the results shows that they also ended their week only three minutes and 15 seconds shy of a podium result.

After 13 hours and 26 minutes of special test racing, that's pretty impressive for the guys. With more experience and a little better luck, Britain getting back onto the ISDE podium is a strong possibility.





Knight's tale

The 90th ISDE from David Knight's viewpoint...

DBR: David, did you enjoy this year's ISDE?

DK: "Yeah, I did. A lot went on, which overshadowed things a bit, but I improved during the event and really started to feel good towards the end of it. It wasn't easy."

DBR: How would you sum it up?
DK: "It's been an interesting one, that's for sure. It shouldn't have been an eventful ISDE for me, but it was. The first few days were okay. I was happy enough seeing where I was at and trying new lines on the tests. I struggled a little bit on the dry, powdery stuff mainly because of physical condition. Then I got disqualified. Then undisqualifed. It was a bit of a strange one."

DBR: Let's start with the disqualification. What the hell happened?

DK: "The marking was non existent at the point where we got lost. I didn't even know we were lost as we followed the marking from the day before. It was a new track, it wasn't even taped or anything. We got to a road and there were no arrows anywhere. That's when we realised we had gone the wrong way."

DBR: Some have commented that you should have just gone back when you realised you were lost. Why didn't you?

DK: "I said to the guys that we had to go back but it was quite a fast trail and it was narrow, kind of dodgy. So we did the right thing, I think, going up to the time check. I asked Jamie Lewis there and he said there was a stamp check back down the trail so I was honest to the guys at the check telling them exactly what happened. I really didn't think it was that big of a deal." **DBR:** Didn't the FIM's course inspector make the exact same mistake you and the seven other riders did?

DK: "Yeah, Micheluz the FIM track guy did the same thing. But he went back to mark the spot as there was no tape there."

DBR: Would you agree that there's a bigger issue now with the whole disqualified rider situation?

DK: "Yes, absolutely. As riders we didn't do anything wrong. I think things like this make the sport even more complicated. And it's complicated enough. People at the event didn't really know what was going on so I can't imagine what it was like trying to understand what was happening for those following the race from a computer. Hopefully they'll see sense and we won't be disqualified. It was a great event apart from that, the ISDE doesn't need a load of negative sh't like this."

DBR: The day after you were disqualified (but rode under appeal) was your best day – you won a test and finished fifth overall. How'd that happen?

DK: "Yeah day four was a good one for me. On day three I had a really bad feeling with the front of the bike so took the forks out and replaced them. They were banging and rattling so I guessed there was something wrong with them. Next morning I refitted them after getting them fixed and also put a softer compound front tyre on and the difference was unbelievable. I immediately started gelling with the bike more and everything was coming naturally so I ended up making times close to the Americans and the Aussies."

DBR: What's your take on the fact several 'top' EWC racers seemed to struggle?

DK: "Everyone can see how good the Americans

and the Aussies have been during this ISDE and that's due to the fact they can read and race the terrain well. During the week I started riding out of instinct again rather than following lines I remembered well. You know, just riding as I saw things. That's what I have always been good at. In GNCC you walk the first mile in the morning and then you ride 11 or 12 miles that you've never seen before as fast as you can go."

DBR: So is it just that ISDE tests get ripped up more than world championship tests?

DK: "Ryan Sipes has got so much experience from motocross and supercross and you watch him ride and think he's not even in a hurry. He takes his time, watches his lines. He was reading the terrain ahead of him, not relying on having walked a test five or six times. Lines change in tests at the ISDE and those that read the terrain best do the best. It's not like that in the EWC, not anymore. With fewer riders, but riders of a closer ability, and more often tests on dry ground that doesn't get cut up so much, lines don't change too much.

"I always had people saying to me riders are slower in America. They're not slower they're faster than most Europeans. Maybe not in the grass fields but in the woods they are. I think the Aussies are starting to be as fast too. They are all bringing each other up. I know guys are saying Kailub got hurt cause he was going really fast but he just popped his knee out, that's something that can happen to anyone. The US and Aussie riders were on it."

DBR: Finally, are you happy with your personal end-of-event results?

DK: "Yeah, pretty much. I knew my fitness was going to hold me back a little. But things were good, especially during the second half of the race. It was nice to get a test win."

With 11 consecutive appearances to his name, Martin Barr has been at the heart of his country's MXoN efforts since 2005. . . .

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Nuno Laranjeira

hen the planet's leading riders lined up at Ernee for the 2015 MXoN the man with the longest unbroken streak of appearances in the World Cup of motocross was Estonia's Tanel Leok. The next longest? Martin Barr.

It's a pretty astounding statistic given that the man from Burnside in Northern Ireland is 28 years old and will be racing the event for the 11th straight time.

and will be racing the event for the 11th straight time.
Coincidentally, he opened his MXoN account at Ernee in 2005. Back then he teamed up with Gordon Crockard and Philip McCullough, Team GB comprised Billy MacKenzie, James Noble and Carl Nunn and the event was won by the American trio of Ricky Carmichael, Keyin Windham and Ivan Tedesco.

Those names help to put things into perspective apart from Billy Mac they're all retired from top-flight racing – and it's tempting to start banging on about Martin's amazing longevity in a sport that by and large favours younger men. But he's hardly over the hill – the truth is simply that he started young, getting the call up for his country when he was an 18 year-old with one adult season under his pett.

On the eve of the Motocross of Nations we caught up with him to get the lowdown on one of Ireland's biggest stars of the last decade...

DBR: How did it all begin for you?

Martin Barr: "I was six years old when I started. I got my first bike – a PW50 – for Christmas and then worked my way through to a LEM 50 and then onto a Kawasaki 60. For the first couple of years I raced in Northern Ireland and then my second year on a 60 I started to do the British championship.

"I got on all right. I was never really right up the front challenging for wins in England but I was winning back home. I didn't really click until I won the British-Supercross Championship on the big wheels in England."

DBR: Is there a family history of racing?

MB: "My dath used to do road racing in Ireland and all over the world and that's where I've got the racing sid from. You can't start circuit racing until, I think, 15 so. I got into the motocross to start off with:"

DBR: The obvious parallel is with Jonathan Rea who started out racing motocross and has just won the World Superbike title: Were you ever tempted to tear up the Tarmac?

MB: "If I'd ever wanted to go down that path my dad would have been happy enough for me to do that and I was offered bikes and stuff at times but the motocross





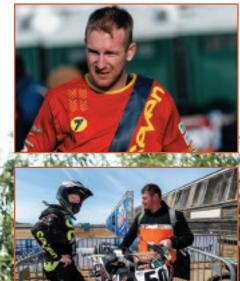






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started kicking off for me and I decided to stay with it."

DBR: You spent the early part of your career racing for Steve Dixon – how did that deal come about?

MB: "When I won the supercross in the big wheels I was sponsored by Fox and at that time Steve was using Fox through Ashley Kane as well and it kinda worked in through that way. I signed with Steve in 2003 and in 2004 I won the 125cc British Premier championship with Dixon Yamaha."

DBR: How did you cope with the move to the adult ranks?

In 2005 I went straight into the MX1 class. I was 17 and went in at the deep end and started off all right - I think I was just outside the top 10. Gordon Crockard was my team-mate and unfortunately for him he got hurt so I got his 450 and started to do a few grands prix. By the end of the year I think my best result was maybe a fifth at the very last round at Matchams. I also scored my first GP points in my home race at Desertmartin. All in all it was a good learning year."

DBR: You also scored points in MX2 the following year at Desertmartin - the circuit obviously suits you...

"It's one of my favourite tracks and when you have such a big home event and you have all your family and friends there it gees you up quite a bit. Obviously a bit of home track knowledge always helps."

DBR: But you started 2006 in MX1 so why the change?

3: "I was struggling in MX1 in GPs – it was all timed practice and I wasn't very good at doing the fast laps but with MX2 there was a qualifying race and then it went into the LCQ."

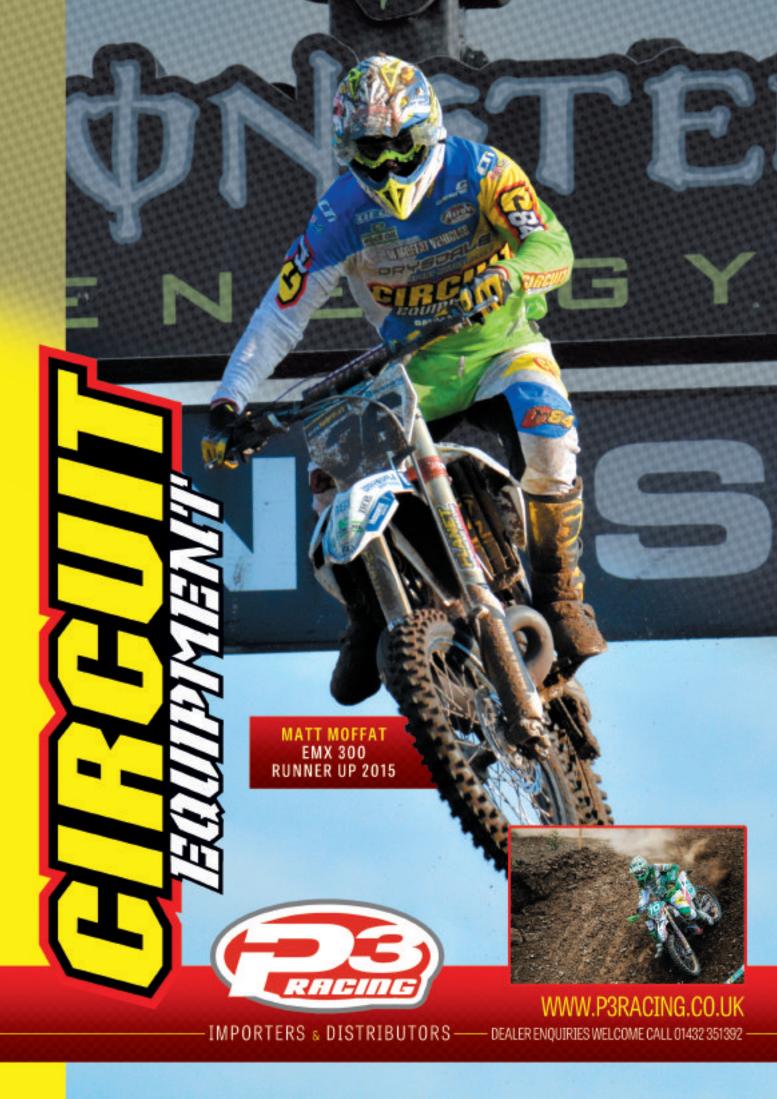
DBR: Your best-ever GP result was 10th overall

in 2007 at Donington in MX2...
il remember it well. It was a good weekend and I enjoyed the track. I just felt something click and I was riding how I knew I could."

DBR: Donington in '07 was the penultimate GP of the year so in a way you signed off on a high

but you didn't build on it the following season...

WB. "I broke my collarbone in qualifying [at the second round] at Bellpuig. I was lying second in the British championship at the time. I got laser treatment and raced the British round at Lyng two weeks later but it broke again through the stress of racing - I had a better result in the second race than I did in the first even though it >>



Goading the GOAT

Martin's MXoN memories

It's clear the MXoN is a big deal to Martin and it made a major impression on him right from the get-go in 2005.

"The first year I got picked for the Motocross des Nations to represent Team Ireland I actually holeshot my heat race. I was 18 and when the likes of Kevin Windham and David Vuillemin passed me I thought I was dreaming. It was a very special moment for me."

Then there was the infamous occasion when one of the sport's greatest legends spat the dummy.

"At Budds Creek in 2008 Ricky Carmichael went down at the first corner and was coming through the pack and all the marshals were basically giving everyone the blue flag for them to move out the way.

"He tried to come up the inside of me and I squeezed the door and as we went over the next jump he threw his hand up so I threw my hand up back at him to say 'we're in a race here'. He is my hero but I still wasn't going to just let him by."

to just let him by."

Ireland has been forced to qualify for the main races via the B Final on a number of occasions which sets the team's MX2 rider up for an exhausting race day schedule. He's won the B Final three times – in 2008, 2011 and 2014 – but his toughest test came at Thunder Valley, Colorado, in 2010.

"If you're the MX2 rider and you have to go to the B Final you do three races on the trot – that's three 35-minute motos in the space of three hours or something stupid. At Thunder Valley it was a case of standing on the pegs and riding round at the end because I had no more energy to push on with the heat and the altitude."

Last year in Latvia he experienced a massive high followed by an equally huge low.

high followed by an equally huge low.
"I dropped down to MX2, won the B Final and got us into the main race again. On the first lap my shoulder popped out again. I put it back in and finished the race but by the time my next race came it had just completely locked solid and there was no way I could've rode.

"It was a bummer to finish the season like that, especially after the way that morning had gone on my MX2 bike beating Butron who was on Cairoli's 350. But that's motocross for you."

was broke. I think I ended up third in the British championship."

DBR: At the end of the 2008 season you parted company with Steve so where did you go? **MB:** "I rode British-only for Rob Hooper in MX2 on a Suzuki and got my first championship race win at Hawkstone Park.

"In 2010 I was originally going to stay with Rob again but at the last-minute one of his sponsors pulled out and the team folded so I ended up signing with PAR Honda two weeks before the start of the British championship. That year worked out pretty well and I ended up third in the British championship again with a couple more race wins, won the Red Bull Pro Nationals MX2 title and got to do a bit of MX1 racing as well on the big bike.

"I signed to race MX1 with Steve Turner in 2011 on a KTM. At the second GP at Valkenswaard I had a really good first race and got 13th but in the second I had a problem with the bike and DNF'd it. We got to do a few grands prix that year and in the British championship I got a few more race wins and my first overall at Foxhill. I was second in the Red Bull and third in the British."

any regrets that your career failed to take off on the world stage?

MB: "I've done some wildcard stuff since but nothing too serious. I definitely had ambitions for the world championship and I still would if the right thing came along but obviously it's just down to financial reasons. It's so expensive to sign up for the year and then you've still got to get yourself to the races.

"I still feel that I haven't shown my true pace at GPs but that's just the way it is. Obviously it'd be nice to do this, that and the other but it is the way it is. It's unfortunate and even now I'd love to get the opportunity to do a full season and go out and show everyone what I can do."

DBR: After such a long period of single-team stability with Steve Dixon it was all change again in 2012 – your fourth different team and fourth different make of machine in four years... MB: "I started off 2012 with LPE Kawasaki but things weren't working out with a few bike problems and other bits and pieces so we decided to part ways and I ended up riding for TYCO Suzuki. The

first weekend







out and won the Red Bull Pro Nationals overall at FatCat so it was like a big weight was off my shoulders.

Beforehand I was having a lot of bad results and when that happens you start to question yourself but I jumped on the Suzuki and won straight away. Things clicked and I finished second overall at Desertmartin in the British and ended the year in sixth.'

DBR: You obviously enjoyed racing for TYCO so why the move back to MX2 on a KTM in 2013? "It was all last-minute. At the start of the year I was supposed to go with Suzuki again but it all fell through so I kinda had nothing but thankfully Shaun [Sisterson] at KTM offered me a deal and I got a bike underneath me.

"I picked the bike up on the way to the first round of the supercross in London so I didn't have much bike preparation although I kept myself physically fit in the gym. For a long time I didn't think I was going to be racing that year.

"At the first round at FatCat I was third in the first race and then I had a silly crash and broke my thumb and had to have an operation to get it plated and screwed back together so I missed a few races. Then I came back for the Red Bull at Culham and won.

"In 2014 I raced for VMX - Graeme Vigor's motocross shop. I started in MX2 but at the second round of the British I popped my shoulder out - I didn't even crash - so I had to go and get it screwed back together so I was out for 10 weeks or something and when I came back I decided to stick to MX1 for the rest of the year."

DBR: After so much upheaval you're now nearing the end of your third season in a row on a KTM...

Coming into the end of 2014 I got a really good deal with Shaun to be backed officially straight from KTM UK and I started my own team - BRT KTM - and things have been going pretty good. We've had a couple of little hiccups. At Canada Heights I crashed and broke my scaphoid but apart from that and Preston Docks where I had a mechanical problem things have been going all right.

"The way things have been going lately I've been feeling really good on the bike and the bike's been working brilliantly. It was just an unfortunate little problem [at Preston]. Coming into it I was fourth in the championship and with Gert Krestinov injured I should have moved up to third but I ended up dropping to fifth."

At the time of our interview Martin was just 27 points off third in the Maxxis series with one round to go. He's also clinched third in the Michelin MX Nationals, 17 points behind winner Kristian Whatley. By most British racers' standards it's been a great season but it's still not good enough to concentrate on racing full-time.

"I have to do a bit of work on the side gardening, building up gym equipment for one of my sponsors - but everything still revolves around racing, that's my #1 goal

"Racing means everything to me. It's the only thing I know. Since I left school I've done a bit of stuff but I've never got a trade. I took the decision to just concentrate on motocross so I've got nothing to fall back on. Motocross is my life - it's what I live for."

By running his own team Martin's got an eye on the future as well as the present as he considers his long-term future in the sport.

"When the day comes and I decide to hang my boots up I would love to have a full-blown team up and running to bring young riders through and give them opportunities the way had opportunities. When that day comes I definitely want to stay with motocross.

"But for moment I'm happy to be still at the sharp end - I'm still giving it 100 per cent every time I go out on a bike even though I'm running my own team and doing a lot of that work with my dad. When I'm in the garage and all the other riders are out practising or training it's quite satisfying to know that I'm up at the sharp end and dicing with them.

"Obviously, you know with motocross that injuries do catch up with you but I'll keep racing as long as I feel I'm competitive. If I feel that I can still give it 100 per cent in a good heated battle up front and I'm still getting a buzz from it then I'll be racing."









Cheers m'dears

Putting a competitive package together to race at British championship level means a lot of help from a lot of people and Martin's keen to thank everyone who's helped him over the years - especially his mum, dad and three older sisters.

He's also lucky to have a great group of current sponsors.

"I couldn't do it without them. It's getting harder and harder and there are less teams about the paddock. I've made something like 36 boat trips this year so there's always that extra bit of cost. I'd also like to say a big thanks to Nick who helps me out and mechanics for me at weekends."

For the record, these are the companies that

help Martin go racing... KTM, BRT, BCL UK & Ireland, RSR, Ci Sport, Seven, Oakley, Alpinestars, Pod, Renthal, Doma, Planet Suspension, Pirelli, MB Performance Racing, Mudbuster, Putoline, Polisport, Brenta brake pads, LR Designs, Hiflowfiltro, JT chains and sprockets, Talon, Leatt, Nutt Travel, Robinson Nisa Extra, Isaac Agnew Van Centre, Agnew Recovery, PGM, Balance Leisure, PDMX.



his scrambles debut. His name was Bryan Sharp. For Bryan it was an eventful and memorable one and despite suffering a broken front brake cable he brought his BSA Bantam home a creditable third in the 125cc race. A crisp £1 note - enough for four gallons of petrol - was the reward for his endeavours. It was a promising start although little could he have imagined that 10 years later he would be a works rider competing against the best in the world or be racing in front of 90,000 people at the Czech motocross GP.

On his immaculately prepared Greeves and Triumphs, Bryan was just one of a sextet of international quality riders comprising of himself 70, brother Triss 71, Jerry Scott 72, Derek and Don Rickman 73 and 74 and Ivor England 75 known affectionately by 1960's scrambles fans as the 'roaring seventies'.

I first saw him in action at a Westbury Sub Mendip event in 1961. Bryan had a distinctively fast but silky Day gold medals, four three-day golds, seven victories in American desert races and 87 one day trials awards over 15 seasons of competition.

Later there would also be success on four wheels and although he never won a major scrambles title there can be little doubt that B. A. Sharp was one of the most talented riders of his generation. To find out more I met him at his home overlooking Poole harbour where we spent several hours reliving some of scrambling's halcvon days.

That both Bryan and Triss should race motorbikes was not surprising as pre-war their father Triss Snr was a top leg-trailing rider - and later captain - of both the New Cross and Crystal Palace speedway teams. Pops - as he later became known - also road raced at Brooklands so bikes were around the Sharp boys from

"Immediately after the war dad made a bike up for Triss and me to ride around the garden. This 'TS special' featured a two speed lawnmower engine and a pair of shortened girder forks in a tubular frame."



The little TS obviously gave Bryan a zest for speed because 12 months later his name first appeared in print – a press cutting which thanks to his meticulous filing and archive system he still has to this day.

"We lived in Croydon and dad was friendly with Joe Francis who owned Brands Hatch – this was in the days before it became a road race circuit. He [dad] had an ex-paratroopers Welbike and I got my name in the papers after they found out that I'd lapped the Brands grass circuit at 32 mph on the little Corgi when I was just 11 years old."

Big brother Triss had made his scrambles baptism at Matchams Park on a James in 1950 although by the time April 1951 came around both Sharp's were mounted on BSA Bantams.

"Triss' Bantam was an ex road-race bike and compared to mine it fairly flew and the funny thing was that irrespective how many times we rebuilt them, mine was always the slower of the two. When you consider it was probably only turning out about four or five bhp in the first place a slight loss of power was a big disadvantage – especially at somewhere like Bulbarrow where I had to push it up the steepest hill."

The Sturminster Newton club's circuit at Bulbarrow was a demanding and often slippery one and it was there in September 1951 Bryan registered his first win. His mount a newly acquired 197cc James which he slithered to victory in the muddy 1000cc handicap race – his £4 in prize money bringing the season's total winnings to £17 15s 0d and described by Bryan as "the highlight of the year".

1951 had been a good year for the younger Sharp brother and his promise had not gone unnoticed. At the season's end he was awarded third best novice in the Pinhard trophy – this prestigious award presented annually to promising youngsters aged 21 or under.

The winter of 1951/'52 saw Bryan in trials action, firstly on a 125cc James and then a DOT. As he told me it heralded the start of three happy and successful years on the Manchester made two-strokes – so much so by the age of 18 he was a fully fledged member of the works scrambles team.

"People like Bill Baraugh and Terry Cheshire were really flying on the works Dots and our local man Dennis Kelly was also going well on one so dad decided to buy a 200cc trials bike. Although it had a rigid rear end this was a bolt-on type so we dispensed with that and had it converted to a Burns twinshock swinging arm. This was a sturdy jig built unit complete with a rear mudguard made by an engineer near the old Croydon airport although at that time Bill's works scrambler still had a rigid rear end"

During 1952 and '53 Bryan put in some stirring rides on the little two-stroke including the 200cc Sunbeam point-to-point where he finished second and in doing so split the works pairing of Baraugh and Vincent. That performance earned Bryan works sponsorship from Dot although this amounted to help with parts and spares and no money. He continued to ride the works bike and on one memorable occasion beat his mentor Baraugh by a wheel in the British Experts at Redditch although often a toss of a coin decided who rode which bike.

Like most young men of his generation Bryan was called up for National Service in 1954 although his position with the Royal Signals at Ripon was conveniently close to the Dot factory and it did little to hinder his burgeoning scrambles career.

The Sharp brothers were attracting other factory interest and in 1955 Ernie Smith lured them away to Francis Barnett. A standard Barnett would only turn out a fairly modest eight or nine bhp and two-stroke tuning was regarded very much as a 'dark art' but compared to the

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CYTO





opposition the Sharp's bikes were 'flyers'.

This was largely attributable to the skilled hands of their father 'Pops' who was regarded as a bit of a guru in racing circles for his ability to extract an extra 25 per cent of power out of the little Franny B. In reality much of this was down to painstaking preparation and the talk in the paddock was that 'spin the wheel on a Sharp bike and it will keep turning longer than the rest'.

There were numerous wins on the Barnett throughout '55 and '56 but he was also getting adept at riding the bigger bangers and in 1957 got a works ride with Triumph. This in turn spawned his first trips to the lucrative continental meetings although as he told me the 'gain' was sometimes at the expense of pain.

"Triss and I rode the Barnetts in the Swiss GP – where I got a puncture – and then in Belgium and Imola. I can't remember much about the race but recall that Triss got food poisoning and I had to get him out of hospital so he could get his start money. I started going to the continental meetings with Arthur Harris and discovered that at some they paid you decent start money but little prize money or sometimes it was the other way around.

"We were at a meeting in France and in the second race I got my foot jammed under the footrest. I was in lots of pain but decided to go out in the third race to qualify for my pay packet. I couldn't brake properly but I managed to finish second overall. Arthur had to drive all the way back home and when I went to hospital they discovered I'd broken my leg."

1958 saw the Francis Barnett team of Bryan, Triss and Ernie Smith in Garmisch Partenkirchen for their first ISDT in which both Sharp's would win gold – the first of six for Bryan.

"That first ISDT was the most enjoyable in all of my motorcycling. I recall that the first day was very wet and we arrived at one particularly steep hill where there was a huge log-jam of riders trying to force their way up. I noticed another steep track to the side so Triss and I zigzagged our way up and bypassed the queue which included Brian Stonebridge on his Greeves who had started before us."

As recognition for winning their gold medals Francis Barnett awarded Bryan and Triss with sets of gold cufflinks but by '59 the works scramblers had gone over to AMC's own engine which prompted a change to Greeves.

"While the Barnetts were using the Villiers engine it was a good bike which both went and handled pretty well. For some reason they then decided to change to their own 250cc AMC unit and although it turned out slightly more torque and power it was plagued with overheating problems.

"The final straw was when I was at the Glastonbury, Wick Farm circuit for the Somerset

GN and in practice the Barnett seized. Dad had become a Greeves agent so as you can imagine Derry Preston-Cobb had been badgering us to ride for them but up until then we'd turned him down. Dad had a Greeves in the back of the van so I asked the organisers if it was okay for me to race it to which they agreed. I'd never sat on it let alone raced it but went out and won the lightweight race from Joe Johnson and Pat Lamper on his Dot. The following week I got a phone call from Preston-Cobb saying 'just got the paper, I see you won the race on a Greeves, is that right?' When I confirmed it was 'Cobby' laughed down the phone for a minute or more and from that point on (1959) I rode

for Greeves."

It was the start of six very successful – and mostly happy – years between Bryan and the Greeves factory which not only saw him notch up numerous wins both at home and abroad but also add further medals to his tally of International Six Day golds. He was also going well on the works Triumph but unlike Triss' bike which sported BSA frame, Ariel swinging arm, Norton forks and a Manx front brake Bryan's was very much a standard machine.

"The frame used to whip and the forks constantly flexed but it was something that you got used to. The Triumph factory never had any real interest in scrambling so we were left pretty much to our own devices and we did all of our own mechanical work on the bikes. There was never any real money in it but for attending a



trade supported 'national' Triumph's paid me about 4d a mile travelling expenses plus a small bonus for a result."

Bryan certainly had some stirring rides on the big twin and was a firm favourite with the continental organisers and fans who sometimes went to extraordinary lengths to help him overcome problems.

"Arthur and I were at a meeting down in the south of France near Bordeaux when my gearbox went. There was little or nothing I could do so they put a request out over the tannoy asking if there was anyone in the crowd with a Triumph road bike. This French chap came forward and between races we stripped the gears out of his bike, transferred them into my scrambler and at the end of the meeting changed them back again. Just for good measure I won the race."

Sharp and Harris were also two of the first British riders to race in Finland but in the autumn of 1960 a chance meeting with Tim Gibbes saw Bryan embark on a six month adventure in America.

"I was on the Greeves stand at the

motorcycle show when Aussie Tim Gibbes came along and asked me if I fancied going to California to race. I can't imagine why he asked me but I liked the sound of it so 'Cobby' hastily organised Greeves agent Nicholson Motors to send me an official invitation and I went off to the US embassy to get my visa.

"I went home and told my parents 'I'm off to America on Monday', collected my riding gear and the following week I was bound for California although at that time I hardly knew where it was. Greeves had just brought out the square barrel so air freighted one to Nicholsons to fit on the bike they'd organised for me.

"They met me on my arrival and told me that two days later I was due to take part in the 'Rams' hare and hounds desert race – which I quickly found out was very different to an English scramble. There was several hundred riders lined up across the desert and when I asked which way I had to go I was told to 'follow that smoke bomb' and then coloured dye on the sand.

"Just before the start my 250cc Greeves seized so Nicholson forfeited his ride and gave me his 200. The start was mayhem and I went over the handlebars but kept going and by the end of the race – won by Bud Ekins on his 650cc Triumph – I was 10th overall and first in the 250 class."

It was a great start for Bryan and he would notch up six more victories on the Greeves although in the famous Big Bear he was thwarted when with half an hour to go – and in a strong 12th place – his clutch packed up.

"The bikes used for the desert races were mostly big twins with very wide 19-inch front tyres and no mudguards. When I asked Bud why this was he answered 'no mud'. Racing at that time in America was very much an amateur sort of thing with little or no money. Nicholsons supplied the bikes and a car for me but I financed my stay by doing some cash in hand repairs at bike shops, showing slide shows to local bike clubs, painting Bud Ekins' house and erecting the grandstand in Pasadena."

On returning to England Bryan brought with him some special valve springs which gave his Triumph a bit of extra urge but '61 saw him in search of 250cc European (world)









championship points with team-mate Dave Bickers. They travelled thousands of miles together through some fairly inhospitable countries although getting out from behind the Iron Curtain was as he revealed sometimes more of a problem than getting in.

"Poland was a particularly dour sort of place and it was a nightmare trying to find fuel stations – after we'd finished the GP we arrived back at the Czech border but the guards wouldn't allow us out of the country. It seems that it was compulsory to have your passport signed at each place you stayed and as ours wasn't stamped we had to drive all the way – several hundred miles – back to Katowic before they would let us leave the country."

Chasing both European championship points and ISDT medals, Bryan would have many more memorable escapades in Eastern Europe which could fill numerous pages. However, we'll limit ourselves to the selector's controversial choice of Trophy team for the '64 ISDT in East Germany – one which didn't include the name of B. A. Sharp or his 250 Greeves.

It had already been displayed by the all conquering Czech and East Germans - plus the likes of Stonebridge and the Sharps - that lightweight quarter-litre two-strokes represented the ISDT future. However, despite his previous superlative performances on the Barnett and Greeves - which had netted five gold medals - there was a stubborn resistance by the British selectors to include 250s in the Trophy team and after being snubbed yet again in '64 Bryan refused to ride in the Vase team. This had the knock on effect of causing ructions at Thundersley as he was also due to represent Greeves in the prestigious Valli Bergamo enduro and - although sympathetic - Bert Greeves told him that if he didn't ride in the ISDT then he couldn't ride in Italy.

Eventually a compromise was reached and he rode in both. With a point to prove he won each motocross hill climb, every special speed test and emerged as best 250 – a performance which helped the Greeves team scoop the coveted Valli trophy. Just to rub salt into the selectors' wounds in the September ISDT both Sharp brothers came away from East Germany with gold medals. Bryan ended up fourth in the highly competitive 250cc class – his earlier decision fully vindicated.

For the 1965 ISDT in the Isle of Man both Bryan and Triss lined up in the Trophy team although the event is now memorable for the atrocious weather which saw only 82 of the original 299 starters finish and – despite the fact that other British team members had already pulled out – controversy surrounding the Sharps' decision to retire.

"The weather was awful and a lot of the time we were manhandling our bikes out of bogs and over stone walls – a situation not helped by the ACU's decision to specify that we all used trials tyres.

"The back up was a shambles and while the likes of the East Germans had all their support team in contact with walkie-talkies and supplied all the riders with hot soup and dry gloves at each check points for us there was often nothing. We arrived at the lunch stop at Douglas – absolutely soaking wet – to find the British management team were sat down in a hotel eating their lunch.

"In some parts of the course we spent more time carrying the bikes than we did riding them – the mudguards broke off and we were riding virtually blind. I remember crashing and got up unable to work out which way I was supposed to be going."

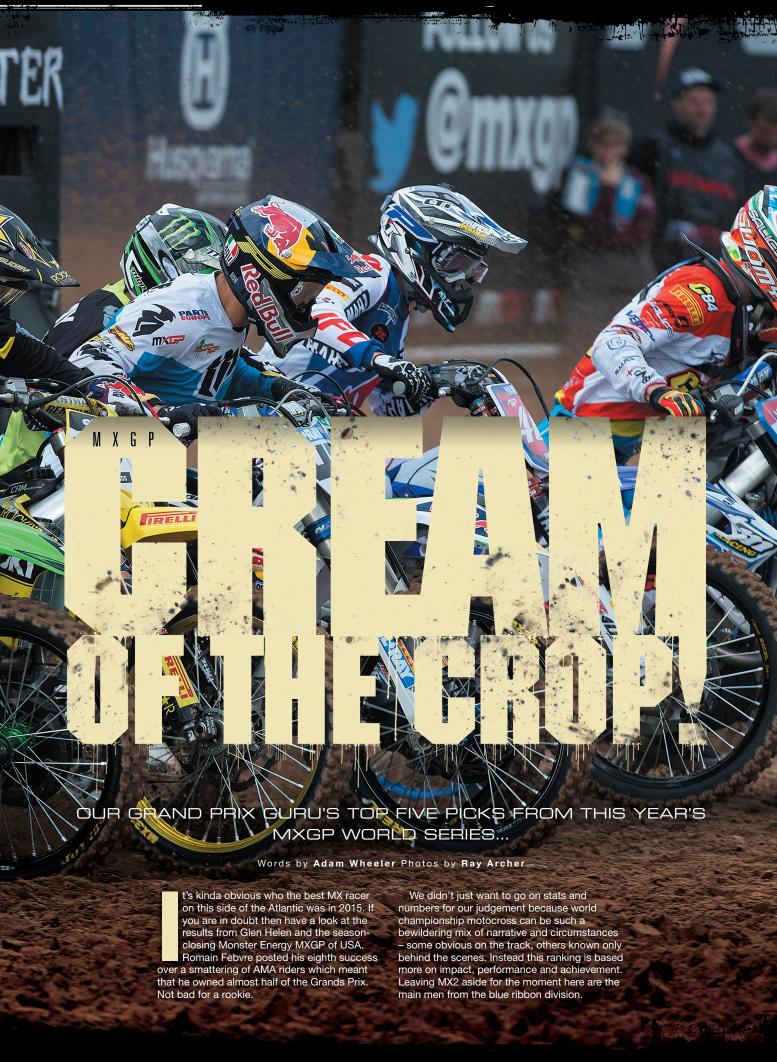
Enough was enough, not only did Bryan and Triss retire at the start of day five they voiced the reason behind their decisions to the press – something that did not go down well within the halls of the ACU or at Thundersley. Despite the fact that many ordinary fans and also well respected journalists like American Lynn Wineland wrote letters in support of their actions, the controversy brought the curtain down on both the Sharp's ISDT career and works contract with Greeves.

On a brace of Metisse machines – one powered by a Triumph and the other by a 200cc Bultaco both loaned by the Rickmans – Bryan continued racing up until the end of '66 when after a spill he decided to retire.

"It was a scramble near Plymouth and following a crash on the little Bulto I ended up in Derriford hospital when the clutch lever went through my thigh. I'd raced for 15 seasons with very little in the way of injuries but by then my career was on the wane so I decided to call it a day."

It wasn't quite the end of the Bryan Sharp racing career because he had five successful seasons racing Formula Ford single seaters – this included pole position at Hockenheim in the European championship and winning the south west Formula Ford title. Although a championship had eluded him for so many years on two wheels one was eventually won on four.







ROMAIN FEBVRE

World Champion, eight Grand Prix victories, 15 moto wins, 13 consecutive podiums

Interviewing Romain Febvre in February at the Yamaha Motor Europe teams presentation in the spacious confines of the MotoGP workshop close to Monza the recently turned 23 year old was a little wide-eyed. He was the new boy in blue, the perceived sidekick to 2014 runner-up Jeremy Van Horebeek and seemingly content with his billing as the MXGP/450 rookie within the factory team.

Two injuries in the winter meant that Romain was keeping his feet on the ground. Actually, this became a common trait all the way through a trail-blazing season in which he visibly grew in stature and confidence. "It is a new class, new team, new bike for me so I cannot say whether I'll be top ten or top five or top twenty," he said that morning in Italy. "I don't know. And it is a big challenge for me but I know how much everybody has been working for 2015 so I hope for the best."

'Hoping for the best' obviously worked and this is what Yamaha and Grand Prix fans were provided by the Frenchman, now a resident in Lommel for several years. Only three terms in MX2 before he had to move into the premier class meant that Febvre was actually one of the least experienced in the category but he was also one of most fearless.

His mental strength and ability to react and block out the expectation and attention around him was a powerful tool and a contrast to his team-mate. Also shining through was his happiness with the works YZ450FM and he never stopped testing with the Italians. Some

vital gains made before the Grand Prix of Sweden for round 11 meant that Febvre was consistently one of the better starters in the group.

His rise was chartable. In a matter of weeks he gleaned a first podium in Spain, moto win the next round at Matterley and then overall at his home Grand Prix in France – of all places – that HRC's Jean-Michel Bayle ranks as one of the turning points in the season with Febvre running clear, Paulin DNF-ing and Desalle picking up an injury that would dump his 2015 altogether.

'461' had already hinted at his contentment with the Yamaha pre-season. His words were not hollow – "the manoeuvrability of the bike is so good. I find it easy to ride and that rubs off on other things."

In our opinion he saved some of the best until last. Mexico was pure supremacy in action (his fourth 1-1 of the year) and the pass around the outside of Cooper Webb down Mount Saint Helen in California summed up the confidence and balls of MXGP's new humble powerhouse.

SHAUN SIMPSON

Fourth in MXGP, two victories, three podiums

No bias here from a British perspective but Shaun Simpson started 2015 outside of the 16-rider collective with full factory support. Many would have thought that to be merely top 10 would see the hard-working Scot hitting at his level. The belief in snaring a top five world championship finish (after coming close in 2014 – he held fifth until the penultimate round) was already in Simpson's mind back in November.

"In the GPs I'll be working towards a mentality of feeling that I can make a top five," he said in a previous DBR feature almost one year ago. "Hopefully we'll get it and then can look at the top three for the year after...that's the way I am looking at it anyway. Some guys can come in and think "I'm going for the title' right away but I've always been a slow burner."

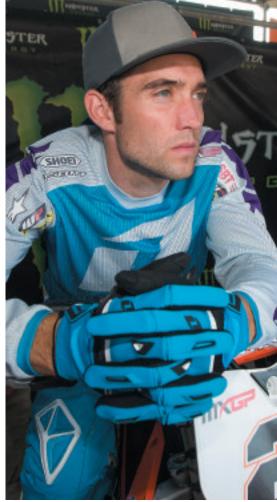
Simpson burned in 2015 alright. With his 2015 Hitachi Construction Machinery Revo KTM and privateer effort (in other words father Willie as mechanic and Shaun as second spanner-man as well as pro athlete) a moto 'podium' came in Sweden and he'd already been haunting the upper half of the top 10 for most of the campaign,

becoming a nuisance among the factory hoards until they started to fall-away one by one and thus highlighted another of Simpson's strengths – his ability to stick and endure and score those points.

In the UK he was unstoppable. Then MXGP entered the sand and '24' found his sauce. "It is an accumulation of doing lap after lap after lap and your body gets programmed. You know how to set your bike, you know how the bumps are going to feel," he said of his connection with the soft stuff. KTM had been watching Simpson prior to Lommel but after that superb win – and with their own works riders plummeting off the scene – they had to act. Ken De Dycker's dusty 2016 450SX-F was provided at Unadilla (a mean fourth) and he notched another rostrum appearance and that memorable second success at Assen to make him the most successful British rider this century in the premier class.

"I am better now as a package than I ever have been...I think that is very fair to say," Simpson also said last winter. "It is nice to be able to say 'guys, you can write-me-off but I'll still be here'. They might be like 'it's only Simpson, he's not going to pass me' but I'll be there for as long as it takes and be ready to pounce with any little mistake."

For us Lommel and going 1-1 was the best British GP win since Tommy Searle's 2012 triumph at Matterley Basin and even surpassed Simpson's own breakthrough at Lierop on a shoestring in 2013. He raised his game in 2015 and then made another step with better equipment in the later stages of the season. What can he do with factory-backed status in 2016?



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EVGENY BOBRYSHEV



Third in MXGP, four podiums

Evgeny Bobryshev was one of the luckiest riders in the paddock at the beginning of 2015. As a clear number two to Gautier Paulin at Honda – even if the team did not treat it that way – 'Bobby' was fortunate in most people's eyes to keep such a high-profile berth in the wake of three seasons of injury and false promises. A period in which he was anything but lucky.

The Russian badly needed a healthy and consistent championship this year and he delivered on the expectation while under pressure and the microscope. Four podiums does not tell the full story of Evgeny's presence. He led races, came through the field, engaged in battle and had a diverse and year-long catalogue of racing – only missing the points once from 36 motos. That he did most of it on the fringes of the top five and better must have come as a massive relief.

"When you are coming back from injury then you have many question marks and you are unsure of a few things – your speed, how you will go, how they will go," he said towards the end of 2014 while recovering from a badly broken left leg. "That's why you need to train, prep and take confidence as fast as you can."

The 27 year old surged and faded throughout 18 rounds but he was there at the end and briefly troubled the top three in the final moto of the year at Glen Helen on what was the second hottest day of 2015 in California. Third place in the championship completed his resurrection and he stood a chance of relegating Paulin right up until the 35th moto of 36. Job done and Bobby will have more pressure in 2016 to try and raise his game even higher.

"I love this [MXGP]," he said. "I think one of the best things in the world is when you do your job and you like your job. I've had some hard times but I like the atmosphere here."



GLENN COLDENHOFF

Eighth in MXGP, one victory, two podiums

Glenn Coldenhoff experienced the type of debut season in MXGP that many people believed Romain Febvre would have. The Dutchman crashed, flirted with top 15 finishes, had doubts in his form, coped with foot and shoulder injuries, triumphed and – importantly – showed progression from being the nervy rookie in Qatar at round one to the resolute professional

that defied sickness in the heat of Glen Helen to record a top five result.

There were times when he waivered. Suzuki lost their belief in the 24 year old on the eve of the Grand Prix of Latvia...and he responded by romping to a surprise victory at Kegums. It was to KTM's benefit and Coldenhoff was swift to confirm a return to the brand that he clinched success at the 2013 British Grand Prix.

"Things like winning a home GP would be nice as well...just winning a GP actually; it doesn't need to be at home," he modestly said earlier in the season. "Winning a race is what you work towards and it is always cool to be 'the man' of that weekend." Coldenhoff was also a popular 'man' at his home event at Assen for his second podium on the sand – one of the most rapturously received results by a native

rider seen this season.

Glenn clearly felt he was making progress. His starts became better and – being a confidence rider – he took 'gains' from his consistency and staying power. "I know if I keep going in my current way then I don't have to be worried about next year," he said assuredly in the early part of the summer. "I don't think I have shown everything that I have to offer. I'm not scared about next season.

"You have to learn quickly and if you see my career I have been playing catch-up as quickly as possible but it takes time for me...and I take my time. I need it. This year is just a learning season but I hope to be better in 2016 by being in the top ten all the time and closing on the top five." By the end of '15 Coldenhoff was already hitting his marks.

MAX NAGL

Sixth in MXGP, three victories, five podiums

Max Nagl finished second and celebrated victory in the final two rounds of 2014. When the bike was right, so was Max. The ingredients were in place for 2015 on the Husqvarna, with IceOne and with markedly improved WP suspension (according to the German).

That Nagl would come out and dominate the opening round in Qatar and then win again by rounds three and four was surprising. We were already writing in the press about the 28 year old being an authentic threat for the championship – and going one better than when he was runner-up in 2009 – when the injury curse struck again at his home Grand Prix of all places.

A broken ankle dragged up the Nagl jinx of rarely making a full season and it was a crushing if not entirely unexpected occurrence. When it was evident that he would not be back for several GPs (despite repeated attempts to ride and train and then falling foul of doctors' orders) Max was again out of the game and then struggled to find the same rhythm of speed and form that had taken him to six red plates.

Nagl had been the rider to catch and had

been building a campaign of glory. It caught everybody's attention and was allegedly one of the factors in Tony Cairoli choosing to drop his favoured 350SX-F in favour of the 450. "I had a feeling that this would be 'the' season where I would want to go for it," he said at round six in Spain and in full control of MXGP. "In 2009 I was second in the championship but I don't think I was mentally ready to go for the title. Now I am...and that's the plan."

Unfortunately the plan didn't follow through for '12' but the combination with Husqvarna was proven (he didn't even race the 2016 FC450 such was his preference for the '15 model). He will be a threat again next season and the hour glass will turn once more for Nagl from Qatar. How long will it last?



THE NEARLY MEN.

Gautier Paulin

It was the biggest transfer of the winter and saw the best of the older French generation (JMB) link up with one of the forefront Motocross of Nations winning figures of current glitterati. Only one Grand Prix win (Valkenswaard) was not in the script and although Gautier marked a career-best as runner-up in the championship we expected him to be riding and attacking exactly how his countryman Romain Febvre was doing on the track. A year of acclimatisation with HRC gets him a pass as does a confidence-knock through a knee injury. More is expected in 2016.

Tony Cairoli

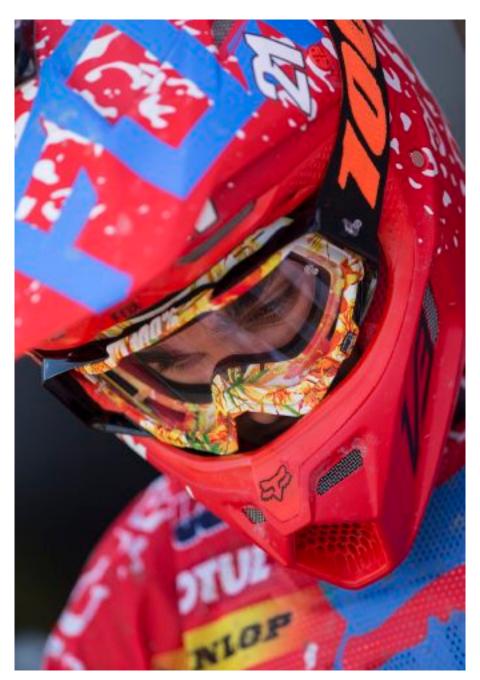
Was the move to the 450 at the start of the season ill judged and advised? Perhaps, but the simple truth is that Tony's luck with injuries simply ran out in 2015. His last significant physical problem had been in 2008 with damaged knee ligaments and it was the Sicilian's turn to cope with a serious ailment that affected his performance to such a degree that he had to turn away from the paddock. He still won two Grands Prix and his presence is the heaviest in the sport. It was unusual not to see a Cairoli title celebration this season. The positive part of the situation will be seen in the reinvigorating effects of being defeated and how he responds.

Clement Desalle

It all started so promisingly for Clement with a string of podiums (six from seven) and he was the only other rider aside from Febvre and Nagl to turn the front of his bike red in 2015. His crash while cruising in practice for the French GP and subsequent popped shoulder was devastating and it rocked the Belgian in what was another injury blighted term. What will he do at Kawasaki next year? He will have to fire back from big disappointment in 2015 which was also the only campaign since 2008 where he did not toast a GP win.

Tommy Searle

Tommy seemed to do everything right in the winter. He partially relocated to Italy and threw himself into Claudio De Carli's MXGP set-up in KTM. Early reports were of a great team atmosphere (Searle even holidayed with Cairoli and their respective partners after the final GP of 2014). A yanked thumb in practice for Qatar provoked tears and was the start of a slow spiral of poor luck, injuries and frustration for '100'. Still unproven on the bigger bike Tommy has to throw off that big question mark with a return to Kawasaki.











Website: www.wildtracksltd.co.uk

Contact: 01638 751918

Location: Newmarket, CB8 7QJ

Length: 1500 metres

Prices: Kids £25, Adults £35, Autos £20

Surface: Sandy based but packed hard

over the years

Shop: Spares van (workshop under

construction)

Catering: Café and American Diner

Kids track: Yes

Bike Hire: Yes

Coaching: Yes

Jet Wash: Yes

Toilets/wash block: Yes

Opening times: Saturdays and Sundays

10am - 4pm

Difficulty: Easy

Enjoyment factor: High

Suitability: Hobby rider's paradise

Safety: Traffic light system and trained medics

Session length: Varies

Groups: Up to four - Expert, Intermediate, Novice, Kids

Based only three miles north of Newmarket – and handily located just off the A11 – WildTracks is a motocross facility unlike any other our country has to offer. After taking over the site in 1994 the current owners have transformed WildTracks from just another run of the mill motocross circuit into a fully-fledged outdoor activity park.

There's never an excuse to be bored when you're at WildTracks with facilities for archery, karting, 4x4, quads and even clay pigeon shooting - amongst a whole host of activities and that's not even mentioning the BMX pump track or the kids play park. There's most definitely plenty for you (or the family) to do while you're not busy twisting the grip!

Most of the activities at WildTracks are open and operational daily, however us moto heads are restricted to the weekends. The tracks are open 10-4 on both Saturday and Sunday. It is worth mentioning however that the WildTracks crew have got plans to open on Wednesdays in the summer so long as they can obtain the planning permission.

The track itself is a sandy based circuit - once upon a time in the early days of its existence WildTracks was mega deep red sand. However over the years after countless bikes have turned countless laps the surface of the track has been pounded harder and harder (stop your giggling). And that is what we find today - a sandy based soil that has been packed rather hard but can still get soft in places and really rough. It's common to find a multitude of long, deep, sweet looking ruts on any given corner at WildTracks and there are always a variety of lines to choose from which keeps things interesting and keeps things fun.

One negative you may find with WildTracks is the lack of decent sized jumps. Don't get me wrong there are a couple of fairly sizable table tops but there's nothing all too daunting or challenging. This is because WildTracks know who their customer base is and what is suitable for them but more on that later...

What you will find at WildTracks in replacement of some big booters are lots of single jumps that you can try and get your scrub on. Some of these singles however are quite blind which isn't ideal.

But have no fear WildTracks have found a solution to this problem. As well as their team of on track marshals, WildTracks boasts a traffic light system much like you see on the AMA Supercross circuits - now that's something that most tracks don't have! These lights are particularly handy on the aforementioned blind jumps - if there's a yellow light flashing you know to take it a little easy. If not then you're good to go ahead and get (or attempt to get) your scrub on.

In the past WildTracks may have been guilty of trying to squeeze in a few too many groups into one block. Meaning that you might turn up on a busy day and only to get to ride once every two hours! Again WildTracks have tackled this problem head on and they have a one ride per hour policy.

If it's a very quiet day then the two groups (adults and kids) will get massive 30 minutes sessions. If it's a little busier than three groups (expert, novice and kids) will get 20 minutes each. And if its mega busy then four groups (expert, intermediate, novice and kids) get a very manageable 15 minutes each. Each group is restricted to 50 riders and they'll never have more than four groups. This way, no matter what, you'll be riding every hour and getting the most out of your money.

WildTracks is an ever popular facility, so in order to ensure you definitely get a ride when you turn up on the weekend it is recommended that you phone (any time between 9 and 5 Monday to Friday) to book your spot and avoid the lines for signing on!

Other than the array of activities and facilities that WildTracks has to offer away from the motocross side of things the site also has



DBR THE CONTROLL CONTROL

125CC TWO-STROKE

YOU'RE MOVING UP FROM A BW85 SO WHAT'S IT TO BE -125CC TWO-STROKE OR 25OF? MAX -WITH HELP FROM HARRY KIMBER - PONDERS THIS PUZZLER...

Words by Max Hind and Dan Grove Photos by Max Hind and Scorch Images otocross is a sport of quick decisions. Inside or outside? Double or triple? Should I or shouldn't I? It's a sport full of judgements that have to be made in an instant. The mind has to be sharp and your eyes must be open...

That said there is one occasion when we are granted a good while longer than an instant to make a decision that may drastically affect our racing careers. When racers reach the point of leaving the BW85 class they have to deliberate one of the toughest decisions in their moto life so far – 125 or 250F?

It's a tough choice. Both have their pros and cons. A lot of kids just aren't mature enough to handle a 250F but they most certainly don't want to be left behind and while 125s are a whole lotta fun lap times may well suffer down the two-stroke route.

This month it has been our mission here on the DBR test team to guide you through these difficult times and in order to help us accomplish our mission we have drafted in the 2015 BYN BW85cc champion Harry Kimber who also just so happens to be weighing up the options for himself...

It was decided that our beloved Husqvarna TC125 would be lent to Harry to compete in his very first big bike race at the UK's largest youth motocross event – the Hardcore Racing MX Master Kids UK. The benefits of this experiment would be threefold. It would be a baptism of fire for Harry and the best test run you could ask for, we could gain an insight into what





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MADISON:



to master the 125 before attempting to tame the 250 seems like a good idea to me – we don't want to run before we've learned to walk...

"The first time I went out on the bike it was pretty sloppy which wasn't ideal as that's not my favourite conditions at the best of times as I'm so small. On the 125 I can't really put my feet down that well so it was difficult but as the day went on and the track dried out I felt a lot better, far more comfortable and loads quicker! It really didn't take long for me to feel at home on the bike.

"I felt the biggest part of the transition was the size of the bike, not the power or the handling. I've raced a Husky 85 all year so I'm used to those bikes and with the 125 I felt a little more comfortable, less cramped and it cornered a lot better."

This goes to show just how inviting the TC125 can be. I know as a matter of fact just how easy she is to ride. The ergonomically friendly design of the bike and the lightweight aspect enables anyone – even a small kid jumping up from an 85 – to hop on and feel at one with the machine.

That's not to say that Harry didn't want to make a few minor adjustments to refine his feeling on the bike and allow him to ride as hard as he desired.

"We made a couple of small changes to the bike before I went out on it. We put in some lighter springs as the standard set-up really wasn't right. It was pretty difficult to set up for my weight but we are trying our best with it and we'll see what we can do.

"We also threw on a specially made

cut-out seat so I could actually touch the floor! I found that better which gave me a little more confidence. We've also got some factory starting blocks. With the standard handlebars my elbows were straight all the time so we fitted 85 bike bars so I could bend my elbows more and feel more comfortable on the bike."

After spending a few days riding with Harry it was clear to see how much he enjoyed riding the TC125 and it was fascinating to watch his progression from a tiny, timid little kid on a big boy's bike to becoming the superstar rider that he is, fully owning it and turning on the style – and that was just in the space of two days!

The HCR MX Master Kids UK would provide the perfect setting to conclude our little experiment. This meeting is by far the largest youth motocross event in the UK and 360 riders from Autos all the way up to the Seniors (MXY2) would do battle on the tough Mildenhall circuit over the course of the three-day weekend.

The sheer scale and spectacle of the event attracts the country's fastest kids meaning that Harry would be racing his potential competition for 2016 should he move up.

Qualifying in a respectable sixth place, Harry proved that he could go out there and mix it up with the best young 125 and 250F riders in the country after only three rides of the bike! The massive amount of riders churning laps throughout the weekend meant that the track got choppy quickly and watching Harry race it was clear he preferred the track flat – the smoother it was the quicker he went. This is peculiar for a rider of Harry's calibre and particularly for a rider who races











in the relentless sands of the Dutch ONK championship.

On his 85 Harry excels the rougher it gets. However, the bigger, heavier 125 meant that he couldn't quite throw the bike around like he's used to, resulting in a slightly more timid performance. It was noticeable that Harry was anxious about using the inside lines and the long, deep ruts. I think this was a combination of smart, sweeping two-stroke lines as well as a fear of tipping over in the ruts. It's safe to say these difficulties Harry faced would've only been exasperated on a 250F and he was able to log some solid results in his first 125cc race outing.

However, Harry still wasn't 100 per cent happy with the bike. He felt he was experiencing a little too much headshake for his liking and I have to say this is something that I've noticed while riding the TC125 around Mildenhall with its short, sharp braking bumps.

After playing around with the suspension to no effect someone came up with the genius idea of giving the headstock bearings a little tighten. Problem solved! So if you're encountering slight handling issues with your Husqvarna I suggest you tighten the headstock a little and see how you get on!

Starts are key and I was worried that Harry would be out-gunned by the 250Fs down the long Mildenhall start straight but Harry pulled off some perfect starts and even grabbed one hell of a holeshot. We worked out that pound for pound Harry actually had the advantage over the bigger, heavier lads on their 250 four-strokes. This just goes to prove what

a sweet little machine we have been able to create over the course of the season.

After the summer rains brought a premature conclusion to the weekend Harry finished a respectable 10th overall. Following a disastrous first race with a few too many spills and a couple of changes to the bike Harry was able to log solid top-six results in a very strong field. So not only is our DBR long-termer a competitive machine at a high level of racing, you can get get in the mix onboard a little 125 even if you're up against the fearsome four-strokes.

So has our little experiment helped Harry make up his mind on his fate for the 2016 season?

"The decision to move up next year hasn't been made for definite yet. I've managed to win everything I can in the big wheels so there's not much left to accomplish and I don't really need to stay down another year. So it's not definite but I think I will make the jump, although I might do the Arenacross series on the 85 and defend my title but we're not too sure on that yet either."

We opened this article stating that we were looking to help riders unsure of what to do when they move up to the big bikes. So what does Harry have to say on the 125 versus 250 predicament?

"Obviously every kid is different so it's hard to say which route is best. You see some guys like George Grigg-Pettitt who are big for their age and then some guys like me who are small. I think it all depends on your size and strength and speed really. As 1 m so small and light the 125 option makes sense for me but a bigger

guy might really struggle on a 125 and a 250 may be more comfortable for them."

Harry has the gist of it – every kid is different. It's almost impossible to find a solution that is best for everyone but with kids (and their dads) wanting to move up through the ranks earlier and earlier I can't help but lean slightly towards the side of the 125 route.

No matter who you are your body is still growing and developing when you're in your early-to-mid teens and modern 250F machines are – in my opinion – designed for fully grown men to race at the highest level.

We are starting to see more and more 125-only championships pop up and if you look over to the GPs where are teams like factory KTM focusing on developing young talent? That's right – the EMX125 class. In order to be successful on a 125 you have to ride and race to the absolute limit and I think that's an essential learning experience for young racers honing their race craft.

If only for a season, racing a 125 is a great stepping stone to the world of big bike racing. I have no doubt that talented kids like Harry could ride a 250F well but if you lose focus for just a second we all know our sport can bite back and I have my doubts that a kid like Harry could wrangle a 250 four-stroke back under control if things got wild...

It may well be safer, you may well develop your race craft to the next level and it could make the transition from youth racing a heck of a lot smoother. Besides, who doesn't want to watch a swarm of hungry 125 racers? I know I do!

Vescul is just one of the many

he fourth round of the 2015 French Junior Motocross Championship, starring Zach Pichon, son of former world and US champion Mickael, visited Vesoul/earlier this year, deep down into Eastern France and the foothills of the Alps. It is one of many magnificent former French grand phix tracks that still regularly host national and regional motocross meetings.

During the first 43 seasons of world championship motocross - ie, until the end of the 20th century - no less than 41 venues hosted a French GP. Compare this with the UK, which totalled 12. This is because the 'home of motocross' awarded its most prestigious events annually to the many deserving clubs who had successfully promoted those non-championship internationals that for 50 years were the lifeblood of Continental MX adventurers.

The Moto Club Vesoul had been awarded its first grand prix in 1960. It was won by Swedish powerhouse Rolf Tibblin on his mighty 500cc foul-stroke Husqvarna. They then waited 18 years before welcoming a 125GP in 1978.

Vesoul originally arose as 'Castrum Vesulium' (fortified hill) in the first millennium and is stuated 200 miles south-east of Paris. I got there by taking the train from London Victoria to the Dover-Calais crossing then boarding another train down to Paris. After traversing the city by Metro from Gare du Nord I embarked on another lengthy rail journey south-east

Fortunately I befriended a group of French students. They were being met at the station by one of their fathers who kindly detoured to the track and dropped me at the paddock entrance. It was close to midnight as I went in search of Roger Harvey's van and found it empty, Roger, as was his perpetual habit, out visiting and inflicting wreaths of cigarette smoke on some hapless rival over a late-night cup of tea - in

THEIR van! The gregarious Midlander loved the way this anti-social behaviour demoralised the poor fit young saps "because they know I'll still," beat them tomorrow!"

magnificent motocross circuits

that France has to offer

This was the weekend of May 6/7 and round five of the 125cc world championship. Triple world champion Gaston Rahier (Suzuki) had won the opening GPs in Austria and Italy before losing out to dynamic Dutch kid Gerard Rond's swift water-cooled Yamaha in Belgium. "Rondo" runner-up in the 1977 series, triumphed again in his hometown of Apeldoorn, where Rahier's factory Suzuki suffered a rare breakdown in race two. This handed the title lead to the confident 'King of Cool' Rond, whose classy riding style pre-empted the great American armada of the eighties.

The ensuing week leading up to Vesoul vividly illustrates the properly hectic lifestyle grand prix motocrossers were living back then. After driving home to Belgium from Apeldoorn



Gaston and his Irish mechanic Bruce Thompson were back on the road at 6.30am Monday en route to Nismes and the second round of the Belgian national 250cc championship!

In relentless rain, round another splendid grand prix circuit, Rahier won both races, beating Harry Everts to take over the title lead. Then it was straight back home to prepare the factory 125. This was when Bruce found out that a part he'd been told was 'impossible to break' had, er...broken in Holland!

He then turned his attention to Gaston's 250 and 500 because on the way to Vesoul Rahier was racing a Thursday evening international at Eke! Thompson took the 125 in his van and Gaston, his wife and their friend Emile the larger bikes.

They left at 7.30 Thursday morning only to find, three hours later, a quagmire that decided Gaston to race his 250 in the three 30-minute motos. Rivals included 500GP contenders Jaak van Velthoven and Graham Noyce. Mishaps plagued his opening races, but third time out he ploughed through the pack after an awful start and finished runner-up behind Belgian giant van-Velthoven's KTM. Noycey had blown his factory

Honda's big end in the first moto!

Rahier and Thompson, this time travelling together in Bruce's van, drove directly to the French GP, arriving at Vesoul late on Friday afternoon. Gaston was even allowed to unload his RM125 and do a few laps of the jumpinfested track, which is set in a huge, cliff-sided amphitheatre with terrific vantage points for spectators! Then they retired to their hotel and met up with team-mate Akira Watanabe, his mechanic Yas and factory engineer Mr Murai. He had brought some more new power parts from Japan to counter the Yamaha threat. Bruce fitted these on Saturday morning and during the two-hour afternoon practice session Gaston found the engine a lot stronger. Ironically Rond

was suffering problems with the Yamaha, water pouring out of the exhaust pipe. He had been allocated race digit 42 - Japan's unlucky number!

A startling total of 12 different manufacturers and 17 rider nationalities contested Sunday morning's timed practice session, which saw Akira fastest, Gaston second and Gerard third.

Rahier catapulted into an early lead in the first moto ahead of Sigi Lerner (KTM), Rond, Andre Massant (Honda) and Watanabe. But before half-distance Rondo was out, his steering head snapped pounding the blue-groove hard-pack track. Watanabe passed Lerner for second to clinch a Suzuki factory one-two while British duo Harvey (Beamish Suzuki) and Geoff Mayes (Kawasaki) were running strongly fifth and sixth behind Corrado Maddii (Beta), both being boarded out on the circuit by their pal Andy Ainsworth, who was riding the 500cc support races.



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Then on the penultimate lap, over a massive jump, Roger was forced off-line by a Belgian lapper and landed on the trackside hay bales. Harv and the Suzuki bounced down the track, throwing bales into the path of the luckless Mayes who, already airborne, also crashed heavily.

Four pursuing rivals, including Italians Ivan Alborghetti (Aprilia) and current Yamaha MXGP boss Michele Rinaldi (TGM) scraped through unharmed before the bemused Brits remounted to appreciative applause from vast ranks of French fans, finishing just inside the points, Geoff ninth and Roger 10th.

Harvey, his Suzuki extensively damaged, was generously helped with repairs between motos by both Bruce Thompson and Jan de Groot's Dutch Kawasaki outfit while Geoff's 17 year-old rookie GP spannerman Colin Wright, son of Kawasaki UK supremo Alec, worked on the KX125. Both men made it to the gate for race two, though Mayes soon pulled out after dropping downfield, hardly encouraged by

Colin writing the merciless message 'Wanker' on his signalling board. It would later transpire that poor Geoffrey had suffered a broken wrist in that first-race contretemps!

Up front a high-speed train featuring Rahier, Lerner, Watanabe and Rond howled round in rousing unison until unlucky Sigi's development Katoom jumped its drive chain and he fell back to fourth ahead of Alborghetti and Maddii. But the crowd's attention, back in those unfathomable days when there were no quick French riders, was riveted noisily on the efforts of wild card Michel Fischer.

I still can vividly hear the course commentator howling 'Allez, Michel, Allez, Allez' and the local lad duly clung on for a single championship point in 10th place ahead of a distinctly battered and bruised Roger Harvey. Gaston Rahier's double race win, combined with Gerard Rond's first race misfortune, meant that the tiny Belgian, after his hectic week of competition – four major events in eight days – had retaken the world 125cc

championship lead on a dramatic day in Vesoul.

And that evening I enjoyed an equally dramatic drive home, Geoff Mayes nursing a very sore wrist while an unsympathetic Colin Wright hurled the Team Green truck violently along the roads of Eastern France and I threw up in the washing up bowl!

Coincidentally, the 'Championnat de France Juniors 125cc' also featured on that weekend's programme with two 30 minute plus two lap races (a pair of grand prix motos today!). Among the 35 entries was 16 year-old Jacky 'Maximum' Vimond who would go on to become his country's first ever world champion eight years later.

And though world motocross would never again visit Vesoul, it's great that those ferociously slick cambers and climbs are still testing the technique of Zach Pichon and a fresh generation of young French stars.

















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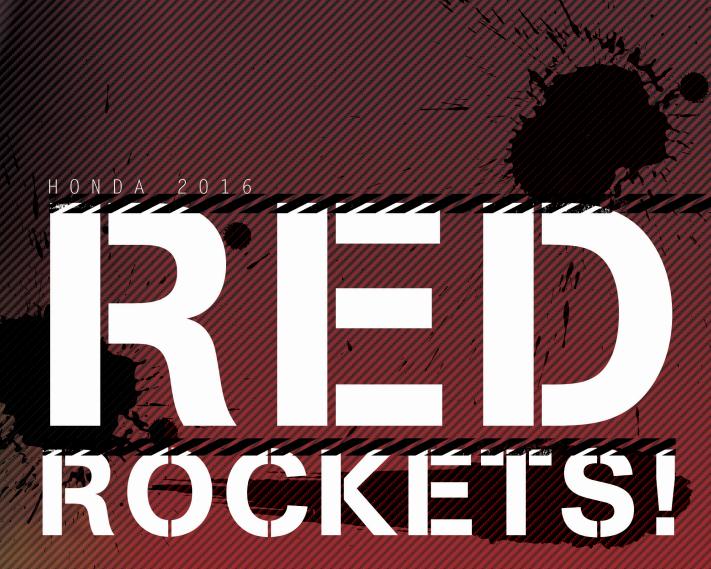






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HONDA'S 2016 MXERS GET RIDDEN N' RATED BY RYAN (NOT VILLOPOTO) HOUGHTON...

Words by Ryan Houghton Photos by Zep Gori

nce upon a time, way back when our illustrious editor Sutty was still in short trousers, Honda ruled the roost in world motocross. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s Grand Prix and AMA riders in all classes were picking up race wins and titles year in, year out – to the point where it seemed like if you didn't race a Honda two-stroke then you were pretty much screwed.

125cc, 250cc and 500cc crowns were won nigh-on every year on both sides of the Atlantic right through from Britain's very own Graham Noyce big bore victory in 1979 until Ricky Carmichael's final 250cc AMA crown in 2003. Hell, back in the day even whole Motocross des Nations teams were made exclusively of the Big Red.

This success at the very highest level of our sport led to club riders enjoying un-paralleled machinery where Honda was often the only choice when scouring the high street dealers. Despite following Yamaha into the four-stroke market very early on, Honda have not nailed either their factory machinery nor their production cousins in anything like the same way as they did 30 years ago. And that reflects

in their results on the world stage and therefore the bikes that we own and race in the real world. Club racers the world over certainly have way more choice of high-class hardware and their money doesn't quite head the way of the world's biggest bike manufacturer in quite the way it once did.

Fast forward to 2015 and Honda have started investing more heavily in their motocross arm once more. Slovenia's Tim Gajser has been charged with getting the most out their MX2 motor and the boy has done the business in the absence of Jeffrey Herlings, winning five GPs and the world title to boot.

Clearly Honda have got their sh*t back together in the premier MXGP class too as big money transfer Gautier Paulin and HRC stalwart Evgeny Bobryshev have been right up the sharp end in the 450cc division. Their consistency at least has provided fans with much more of a look at how potent a Honda can be in the right hands.

With all this in mind I headed off to Gallarate, in Italy – a former GP track where the late Andrew McFarlane won his maiden MX2 GP way back in 2004. It's a typical northern Italian circuit which is hard as a rock, on a hillside and really quite fast















Another good thing about the engine is that it feels race ready. That will be a huge bonus to those club riders who can't afford the time or the wonga to bump up their horses.

Suspension wise the new 49mm Showa babies were great. I've never used air forks before but the Single Fork Function – Triple Air Chamber units worked beautifully at Gallarate. A typical hillside circuit, the hard pack nature of the track meant a real heavy work load on the front end of the bikes but the Showa forks gave you the confidence to brake that extra bit later lap after lap.

To achieve this Honda (Showa is owned by Honda of course) have taken the weight out of the left fork to offset the weight gained by having the braking mechanism on that side. The SFF acronym is just a fancy term for compression and rebound being in separate forks. Clever work I'd say and that makes for a very plush, very predictable stroke that gives excellent stability.

The forks themselves have also been lengthened by 5mm and although I haven't ridden last year's version I can say without

question that the 2016 CRF handles really well, in fact it turns on a six pence. It genuinely is lovely through the corners and the new 260mm front brake discs have helped your stopping power no end. This sort of steady predictable nature of the bike makes it a good choice for the club men who chose handling over outright power.

Although the CRF250R isn't necessarily my favourite bike in the MX2 division I would recommend it for riders who are choosing their first 250F. If you are getting off a 125cc two-stroke for example the Honda is the ideal machine because it is very user friendly. The handling is very predictable and is also the sensible option for those who chase a beautifully handling machine. Having said that the bike has enough power to satisfy most tastes – especially novices – and is way better than in previous seasons.

The 450 is virtually unchanged for 2016 which is a shame but you can sense that with Honda's four year development plan that big changes are coming in 2017. In the Japanese championship the 450 looks like an all-new

machine which even sees an electric start. Let's hope they bring that and other goodies to the table for next year.

As I said earlier Honda have had a pretty lean time at world championship level racing, having not won a premier class title since 2000 with their immense two-stroke 250 under the guidance of Frederic Bolley. The four-stroke era has seen many high class riders aboard the big red but without much input from HRC it was left to satellite teams like our very own CAS Honda to try to eke out Grand Prix wins. Consequently, Honda ain't had a real MX1 title contender since the days of Mickael Pichon and Josh Coppins in the mid-noughties.

Now in 2015 Honda have opened up their wallets and brought in Gautier Paulin as their number one rider and motorcycle legend Jean-Michel Bayle to oversee the team in his role as sporting manager. Although I'm sure Honda felt Paulin especially would spend more time up front this season, the fact that HRC is willing to put more time, cash and work into their Grand Prix team should mean loads of development and goodies heading down to the humble club >>



riders who part with their hard earned cash.

For 2016 Honda have changed very little to their flagship model although upgrades include a new 260mm front brake disc, second generation Kayaba PSF2 forks and more power via an HRC-spec cylinder head and new shorter exhaust.

The new edition I like the most is the introduction of a EMSB which stands for Engine Mode Select Button. This button gives you a choice of three pre-determined engine maps and comes on both the 450 and 250 machines. The button is on the right side of the handlebar and is activated by having the engine in idle and holding the button for a second or so.

An LED light indicates which Mode you are in and away you go. Mode 1 uses the standard combination of ignition and fuelling maps to present balanced power and torque delivery. Mode 2 is designed for use in slippery and muddy conditions, giving the rider easy to

manage feel and hunts out every last shred of traction. Mode 3 hits you with aggressive and responsive top end to drive through deep soft sand. As an added bonus Modes 2 and 3 can be tailored via existing HRC mapping hardware and software.

I really liked the ability to change your mapping settings while at a race meeting but I would say you might have to fiddle with the modes yourself because I wanted to be in 'aggressive' mode 3 all the time. The beauty being of course that this is all down to personal preference so with a bit of know how you should be able to tailor the engine mapping to each circuit or terrain you ride on regularly and be confident that the bike will work every time you race.

As for the engine itself I loved the bottom-end power on the 450. Coming out of the corners you don't need to use the clutch at all as the big CRF has so much torque at the lower end of

the rev range. Unfortunately once you reach the top end the Honda is definitely not in the same league as its MX1 rivals. The numbers alone speak for themselves with Honda claiming to have produced 53HP, which is not only down on the competition but it's also a couple kilos podgier than the lightest in class. That said the bike has a very controllable amount of power and if you don't want a bike that tears your arms off then it may well suit a rider that has to go to work on a Monday morning.

I found the CRF450R really easy to chuck around in the air the KYB PSF2 forks worked really well soaking up everything that Gallarate had to throw at it. I was surprised that I couldn't notice much difference between the KYB and Showa units from the 250 – well nothing that screamed at me anyway – but I guess that's down to how well both units perform in hard pack conditions.

You certainly won't be disappointed in front



TECH SPECS!







CRF450R

Displacement: 449.7cc **Bore and stroke:** 96 x 62.1 mm

Transmission: 5 gears

Fuel system: 46mm PGM-FI dual fuel injection **Front suspension:** Kayaba 48mm PFS2 forks

Rear suspension: Kayaba rear shock

with Pro Link system

Suspension travel front/rear: 310/315mm Front/rear brakes: Disc brake 260/240 mm

Wheel base: 1494mm Ground clearance: 332mm Seat height: 955mm Fuel capacity: 6.3 litres Kerb Weight: 110.6kg







CRF250R

Displacement: 249cc

Bore and stroke: 76.8 x 53.8 mm

Transmission: 5 gears

Fuel system: 46mm PGM-FI dual fuel injection Front suspension: Showa 49mm SFF-TAC air fork

Rear suspension: Showa rear shock

with Pro Link system

Suspension travel front/rear: 310/317.6mm Front/rear brakes: Disc brake 260/240 mm

Wheel base: 1489mm Ground clearance: 322mm Seat height: 951mm Fuel capacity: 6.3 litres Kerb Weight: 105.6kg

end performance. The Honda Progressive Steering Damper works a treat eliminating head-shake at fast speeds and along with the forks being extended 5mm (the same as the 250 again) the bike gives a nice neutral feeling. When entering corners under hard braking the bike tracks the ground giving you immense confidence to push that bit extra. I would say that is all down to the efforts Honda have put into improving their suspension for next season. Both the front forks and the rear shock feature adjusters which allow the high/low speed compression and rebound damping to be altered easily and without too much fuss.

Something that regular Honda riders will be happy with is the edition of a new footpeg bracket design. Riders had been reporting that exiting corners their pegs would get jammed by mud or a rock and get stuck in the up position. Clearly that aint very handy and Honda have since revised the bracket to eliminate

this problem.

For me as a large fella the bike seemed a tad cramped but I think changing the bars and the footpeg position would certainly help.

Overall I like the 450 on hard pack because it did handle really well. That is a big plus for the Junior level rider where stability and predictability are their friends. However I'm not so sure the bike would suit experts in its current condition. In sand it would be a bit on the slow side and heavy on that front end. The forks might need pulling through the triple clamps as well but this is just rider preference again.

For me personally, I would have liked the 450 to have thrown me back in my seat a bit more. The CRF just didn't grab my attention and is just missing that edge when compared to its rivals. But of course if you like Hondas you and/or your spanner man are willing to sit down and put some work into the bike it has potential to be a good all-round machine.



A blueprint for how modern motocross should be, the Vets MXdN is the best

two days of retro racing anywhere on the planet...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Haggis Hartman and Pip Spicer

PROJECT: A BY B D ME WEEK







FORCEFIELD BODY ARMOUR







ruising into Farleigh Castle's top entrance early Friday evening – the track, paddock and sprawling campsite spread out below – is a flashback to mid '80s GP racing and testament to the incredible success of an event that didn't even exist until 2009.

Mint Evo and twin-shock machines, period kit, past and present stars, weekend warriors and have-a-go heroes, a pall of two-stroke exhaust smoke and the scent of pre-mix hanging heavy in the air. All that's missing is a Speedos-clad Jack Burnicle firing off a few rolls of film and stone-throwing Belgian fans buzzed on too many Jupilers.

Sterile, corporate bullshit? Nah, modern GPs can keep that! This, retro race fans, is the Vets MXdN. An authentic slice of life before infrastructure mattered more than racing, before TV audiences took precedence over trackside fans. It's climbing into a motocross DeLorean and setting the controls for a time when 500cc two-strokes were the main event. And it's a blueprint of how MX should always be.

The Vets MXdN's very own Dr Emmett Brown is 53-year-old builder Dave King. A diehard fan since the '70s, he conceived the event as a way of reuniting Dave Thorpe with his '89 world championship-winning bike – which he owns – at a track DT will forever be associated with. It was a nuts idea. And it worked.

Over the years some of the biggest names in world MX have turned their wheels at the event. Thorpey, Jean-Michel Bayle, Ron Lechien, Jeff Ward, Georges Jobe, Chuck Sun, Jeff Stanton, Graham Noyce, Neil Hudson – it's a who's who of motocross greatness that attracts fans in their thousands.

For 2015 two-time world champ Trampas Parker is the headlining act along with a supporting cast that includes fellow US stars John Dowd, Broc Glover and Doug Dubach along with Ireland's Gordon Crockard and Laurence Spence, Belgium's Werner Dewitt and Sven Breugelmans and current top-flight riders Brad Anderson, Elliott Banks-Browne, Graeme Irwin and Billy MacKenzie. Chuck in >> Euro Evo champ Ryan Voase and Brian Wheeler plus many more talented riders and all the ingredients are there for a weekend of off-track laidback nostalgia and fierce, competitive racing.

The list of classes is exhaustive – from Pre-83 125cc twin-shock through to Evo 500 – and with over 500 riders two gates are needed for most motos. Unsurprisingly, the social side is just as important with on-stage interviews and live bands in a marquee where the Bee Sting cider flows like a golden, liver-lethal torrent and bench racing is top of the agenda.

So what exactly is the secret of the VMXdN and why has it captured the imagination of racers and race fans?

"I think it's real motocross – no man-made jumps – and fortunately it's a classic venue with history which helps," says King. "The venue is really easy to sell to people to get them to come. Even if you were just camping in the field it's just a pleasant place to be.

"It's grown steadily. There's been no massive surge. I thought 2013 would be the big one when we had Jean-Michel Bayle and Team France with Demaria, Bolley and Jacky Vimond there but last year we had lesser names than we had in 2013 and it didn't make any difference. It's grown out of all proportion really.

"To me the social side is more important than the racing. Initially I just wanted to get all my mates together to have a bloody good craic. There's still a great core of British guys who ride week-in, week-out who always come plus >>>















you've got all the foreign riders which makes it so special."

One of the highlights of the weekend is a parade of champions, this year led by the legendary John 'The Baron' Banks. There are some misty eyes among the old-timers lining the track as the man with the greatest motocross nickname ever rides a lap on a CCM - even six-time AMA champ Glover is in awe of his boyhood hero.

A regular at the event, former British champ and GP winner Crockard sums up why the VMXdN floats his boat.

"It's the nostalgia, the atmosphere, the celebration of '80s motocross in Great Britain," says the Crock Star. "I was here as a boy watching all my heroes – Thorpe, Geboers, Malherbe, Jobe, Nicoll, Spence, Watson. I was here at all those races from '85 right through. It's reliving what I used to come and admire. I'm just a super-fan living out a dream – it sounds cheesy but that's it.

"The results don't really matter – it doesn't need to be about that. Racing here I've passed Jeff Stanton, Trampas Parker, Rob Herring, John Dowd, Ryan Hughes – so many guys that I looked up to when I was a kid.

"When Stanton was here all that was going

through my head was 'that's Jeff Stanton, that's Jeff Stanton' – I was riding behind him and just watching thinking 'isn't he cool'. Then I was like 'Gordon, this is a race, pass him!'. For me it's totally about celebrating the grand prix era we had with the 500s."

GC's sentiments are echoed by Dubach, the world's most decorated Vets racer...

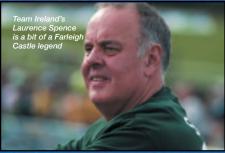
"Farleigh Castle represents true motocross," he says. "I think we all come here for the same reason, whether you're the fastest guy or you're not it's all about getting back to the roots of motocross, riding some old bikes, seeing a lot of old friends.

"I see mechanics who helped me 25 years ago in supercross all through Europe. It's just a great event. It's like a homecoming, as we say in the States it's like Woodstock. That's what Farleigh means to me."

The format isn't perfect – the two start gates and staggered starts aren't universally popular and some of the genuine vets aren't happy about being taken to the ropes by 20-something throttle jockeys – but the event is constantly evolving and King's got his ear to the ground.

Plans are already in place for next year's Vets MXdN which is scheduled for September 3/4. Get it in your diary...







The report bit!

Land of Hope and Glory...

The weekend's biggie is the Evo Vets MXdN and defending champions England race to a resounding win against the might of the USA. If only our modern squad could emulate the efforts of Voase, Wheeler, Craig Pratley and Neil Prince.

Former British champion Prince – manager of our team for this year's Motocross of Nations at Ernee – struggles all weekend. The odds are stacked against him on his 125 against the bigger-bore bikes down the long Farleigh start straight but Voase, Wheeler and Pratley are rock solid with only a last-lap altercation with a back-marker costing Voase the individual overall.

The win is emphatic and the English fans are euphoric...

"I enjoyed it and the team's won it and that's what we were here for," says Voase who loses the overall to Dowd by a single point. "There are some big names - I was a bit star-struck with a few of them and it was mint to race them."

Former 500 GP contender Wheeler, who at 46 is the team's senior citizen, had enjoyed lots of pre-event social media hype with Parker. Despite being unhappy with his form on Sunday the burly Gloucestershire man was the rock the

A SECTION STORES

English victory was built upon.

"Today I was riding useless," he admits. "I was struggling to find lines and as a rule around here I'm the one who finds them. John Dowd was so much quicker down through the wood and I couldn't get my head around it. I was going okay but I needed to get in behind Ryan right away and I didn't. But we won it and that's what counts."

Former British championship front runner Pratley is all smiles at the end of the weekend but the 42-year-old has felt the pace.

"That was really hard," he says. "If you're not riding regularly and I'm not then it's a real struggle because those guys are on it. They may be a bit older but they're still aggressive on the first two laps. But I managed to hang on – just."

Heads & All Threads Suzuki team boss Prince digs deep but is playing catch-up all weekend after going down in the first turn in his opening race and DNFing.

"I'm happy for the boys," he says. "This weekend I've been a let-down to them really. The first race today when I came in I felt like I was having a heart attack and it was the same in the second.

"To race at this level with these guys you need to be fit, you need to be on the bike and while I do a bit of local racing I don't practice anymore so it's hard for me to come here and be anywhere near where Craig, Brian and Ryan are at."





very year the organising team behind the Vets MXdN bring in a handful of big-name racers to headline the two-day celebration of retro racing at Farleigh Castle.

In the past legends such as Dave Thorpe, Jean-Michel Bayle, Jacky Vimon

Dave Thorpe, Jean-Michel Bayle, Jacky Vimond and Jeff Stanton have all been happy to oblige and for 2015 star billing went to double world champion Trampas Parker.

His soft Louisiana drawl belying the years he spent racing in Europe, the '89 125 and '91 250cc champion revealed he was fulfilling a long-held ambition to race at the iconic Wiltshire circuit.

"This is the one track I'd always said I wanted to ride. I watched it on video one time – it might have been the '85 500 GP when Dave Thorpe crashed and came from behind – and I always said I wanted to ride it and after today I can say

I got to ride the track."

The 48-year-old's now based in Oklahoma where he runs his own MX academy but the strains of a GP career that stretched for nearly two decades mean he rarely rides – although he still looked as stylish as hell at Farleigh.

"I don't ride much anymore but I still enjoy all the training off the track – the working out, the running and I like to do that with the riders. I just don't like to ride any more because it makes my back hurt so bad but off the track I still love to compete."

Parker's first GP points came in '87 on a 500cc Kawasaki in Spain and he scored the following year at the Czech 250cc GP but he was pretty much a complete unknown when he exploded onto the scene in '89 and beat Alex Puzar to the world 125cc crown. The 250cc title followed two years later after a thrilling season showdown with Mike Healey in Japan and he

came close to completing the fabled '875' when he just lost out to Joel Smets in the 1995 world 500cc championship.

"I spent a lot of years over here and I really enjoyed it and I learned a lot of stuff. I found out it's difficult going to the different countries and racing. Sometimes I finished the race and I smelled like an alcoholic – that's from the beers that gets throwed at ya. When you went to Belgium you knew that you wanted to take a chest protector for sure because if you were leading the race you was going to get clobbered [by the fans].

"Holland one year they took me off the bike but that was part of the deal and I know Thorpey had that trouble when he was in Belgium and Jobe and those guys had that trouble when they were in England. That was just part of it."

Parker was a champion in an era where





Looking back on the extraordinary career of South African export Tyla Rattray . . .

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Nuno Laranjeira

yla Rattray left South Africa to run away with the GP circus as a wide-eyed 14 year old in an attempt to hunt down some big game and realise his dream of becoming a world champion. He made that dream a reality and now after an illustrious career he can look back on that journey.

Like any world championship title, it's earned and it doesn't come without hard work, plenty of gusto, relentless passion and the obvious setbacks along the way. Rattray has often had to dig deep but then after leaving the comfort zone of home at such a young age it seemed inevitable really. He grew up fast, he grew up keen and he was under no illusions that he only had one shot. So he took it.

With the curtain coming down on his racing career, we sat down with the soon to be 30 year old to digest a life of what has been, where he's at and where's he going. It was an absolute pleasure

to sit there, chat and listen as he recalled the transformation from boy to man on his journey to fulfil his dream. There's a real sense of pride in what he's achieved and a certainty that he will be ending his racing career with nothing left on the table. Tyla Rattray – a true warrior from South Africa who went to battle around the world.

DBR: Why motocross?

TR: "Like so many people I started really young and it wasn't a conscious decision. I was three or four years old! My dad had a friend whose kid had a motorcycle and I always liked cruising over their place to have a go. We'd take turns and that was it, I was hooked, it's all I ever wanted to do. So one Christmas I was given a motorcycle and we worked out that you could race one of those little things – I'm 29 now and still racing!"



DBR: Can you pinpoint the moment where you knew you wanted to be a professional racer and was going to throw everything at it?

TR: "You know, it starts off as something fun or at least it should do when you're a kid – five, six, seven, whatever. It's something you like to do, you're free, you like to express yourself and go and ride your motorbike. You don't have your mother shouting in your ear or telling you off or your dad moaning at you – it's just you on your motorbike and total freedom, it's just all about you in that moment and I think that's the real appeal and always will be. Then you start to get better at it and a bit older and you start to realise you could maybe get somewhere in the sport. For me, that happened when I was around 14 I think.

"So I came over to Europe and did some races here. I watched supercross and Jeremy McGrath and Carmichael, in Europe people like Everts, Bolley and Beirer and they all motivated me to want to become a pro, so we came to Europe to give it a go. When I first came to Europe in 2000 I hated it. It was tough man. It was me, Gareth Swanepoel and Tinus Nel and then my stepdad Wayne and my uncle Kelly. It's kind of crazy how it's all worked out with Kelly being Ken Roczen's mechanic and Wayne the crew chief at Troy Lee KTM and myself all racing at a professional level."

DBR: So, judging on what you said there I'm guessing you really felt like a fish out of water when you first came to Europe?

TR: "Yeah for sure, the first time I came over it was a Dutch championship in March and I was lapped twice! Never in my life had I seen a sand track like that before. I walked it on Friday when it was flat and thought to myself 'this track is going to be so good, I'm going to enjoy this' but then come race day there were these massive holes before each jump, big ruts up the take off and all over the track, all these things I've never really ridden before.

"I was so scared out there. I was like a complete novice, taking both feet off and riding through ruts like that. I certainly didn't hit the ground running in Europe that's for sure. It took me over a year to progress from starting on the second row of Dutch championship races to being in the top five – I worked my butt off.

"I started doing a few GPs in 2001, I think I qualified for six out of the 10 that I did. 2004 was my real breakthrough year when I finished second in the world behind Ben Townley."

DBR: Looking back on it right here and now, that first difficult year in Europe has to be the defining moment of your entire career doesn't it? Did you at any one point think 'I can't do this' and think of going back home?

TR: "I think so, it wasn't the easiest of times being away from home and struggling. I didn't really think of going home but there were certainly days I missed it and that was tough. It was only very occasionally like if I had a real bad day, for the best part I stayed focused and determined to not leave anything behind and give it my best shot. I knew the sacrifices everyone was making, not just me. The situation like I was in is a make or break for anyone, any rider coming over to Europe or leaving home to go anywhere in the world to race has to give it everything, it takes a lot of commitment from everyone involved in making a life changing decision like that. Everything is so different, the cultures, the tracks, the food...everything, it's a shock. I know I was shocked."

DBR: Before you came over did you have a mental picture of what it was going to be like and or were you truly wet behind the ears so to speak?

TR: "When I came over I was 14 so I was still a kid and quickly had to become a man. At that age you're an impressionable kid just starting to find out more about life. You think you know how it all works and at that age you start to become opinionated but the truth is you don't know a lot.

"What I did know at that stage was that my



parents didn't really have anything. My Gran helped us out a lot so I could go racing and I had that in my mind all the time when I was in Europe. I didn't really have anything to go back home to. I knew it was a real opportunity for me and it was only up to me to take it.

"At the end of 2001 I proved to myself that I was going forward and that gave me a load of confidence, that's when I really started to believing I was going to make it. I had the mindset then that 'I have to make it'. I kind of grew up quickly right there in that moment. It's the mindset, right?"

DBR: Too true, it maps out the route of your life, or at least I think so. Talking of routes in life, was going to America at that stage in your thoughts?

TR: "A lot of young kids look to America, let's be honest everyone in the sport follows what goes on over there but at that stage I didn't even think of going there. I think just because a lot of the people I knew from South Africa had already come to Europe, like Grant (Langston) and Greg (Albertyn) and won world championships and I looked up to those guys. It was also the better option because of distance from home, the finances to do it and the connections with people like Tinus.

"If you go to America and you want to make

it, you have to get on to a good team and have really good bike, you have to either be there from a really young age and go through the system or come in with a pedigree. That's hard enough for motocross but you also have to hit the ground running with supercross and that's hard to do.

"My goal was always to come to Europe and make it here first, and then see what happened. I knew it wasn't even worth thinking about until I reached my goals and won a world championship."

DBR: Do you feel like a role model to aspiring South African riders?

TR: "I guess so, it's not something I consciously think about, although I'd like to think I've handled myself well and I could be a role model to any young rider. I looked up to Greg and Grant so maybe some of the young South African kids have looked up to me, and if they do, then great. I'll help them all I can, especially if they come to Europe.

"That said the younger generation are not the same as when I was coming up through. I didn't worry what I looked like, or what hats I had on, or what style of sunglasses I had on. That's what the young generation seem to be all about these days, it's seems to me the wrong attitude to try and make it in a professional sport, especially this one. They're more worried about how many followers they have on Twitter than how many races they win. They'll get more followers by winning, definitely the ones that matter anyway.

"Concentrate on becoming a pro rider and then in five years when you're winning GPs you'll have 200,000 followers. Don't worry about that now when you're still trying to make it because you'll look stupid when you have a million followers and come to nothing. I'd take a GP win or world championship over being popular on social media any day."

DBR: Fair to say you're career certainly hasn't come to nothing. Tell me what it was like when 'that moment' came and you finally chased down your dream of becoming a world champion.

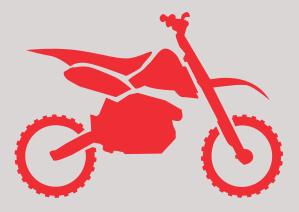
TR: "I know people have said this before but it really is hard to put into words how it feels. For me, the first overriding emotion was relief. I think whether you win one or 10, when you win, you win and all that hard work and pressure you put on yourself releases in that moment. Having said that the first time will always be that little more-special because it's a new experience.

"I put so much effort into winning it in 2008. I trained hard back home in South Africa and changed things up a little bit with my training.





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By the end of 2006 I had made my mind up that I wanted to go and race in America and by then I had spoken to Mitch Payton and he said to me that when I'd won a world championship I could go and race for his team – so that was extra motivation. He was true to his word, we made a deal and I went."

DBR: That was a surprise move for some; they were probably expecting you to stay in Europe for a little longer and race Cairoli and co for more world championships. Any regrets about that?

TR: "No, I have no regrets about that at all. I wanted to go to America at that time, I had a good opportunity with Mitch and I took it. I was ready to take on supercross and a new challenge at that point. Whether I won a supercross title or not, I wanted to have that experience and that learning curve.

"It was like starting over again just like when I first moved to Europe when I was 14, only with a little more experience because I was an adult. I wanted to go there and give it a try, if it didn't work out I knew I could come back to Europe but I didn't want to regret not going there while I was young enough and healthy enough to compete.

"To have that experience of rolling out in a stadium in front of 65,000 people and racing is something else, especially when you're battling for the lead. I remember I was racing for the win with Cole Seely at Anaheim in 2011 – man, the crowd were going nuts!"

DBR: How would you evaluate your time racing in America?

TR: "I was over there for five years on Mitch's team. I worked with a great group of guys and worked really hard. As I said, it's something I don't regret because I wanted to have that experience and look back on my career and say I did it. I knew it was going to be tough because >>>



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when I first went to America I couldn't get through the whoops, but I thought, 'hey, you've been through this before' like when I came to Europe and couldn't ride sand.

"Ryan Villopoto – and others – helped me learn how to take them on and I just worked really hard at it. It was a great learning experience for me and supercross eventually gave me even more confidence on the bike. You know, I think everyone knows that America drives the motocross industry, mostly because of their supercross series. The industry is so much bigger because of it.

"One thing I do regret is not winning a main event supercross – that kind of bums me out a little, especially knowing the amount of work I put in with Aldon (Baker – his trainer). I won nationals, I came from behind to win and I gave my all but it would've been great to have a supercross main event win because in my opinion it's one of the hardest things to do in our sport."

DBR: Obviously you built good relationships in America, most notably with your team-mate at Pro Circuit in those years – Ryan Villopoto. It must be cool that both of you guys have ended up in Europe on what looks set to be your final year racing?

TR: "Yeah it is. We've been able to train and ride together and that was a factor in Ryan coming over to race the GPs – we've become very good friends. It's always that little bit easier to train when you know someone else is suffering with you! It's not anything new for us

either because we've trained together so many times with Aldon. We push each other along. A lot of times in training I'd set off 15 seconds in front of Ryan and he'd have to catch me up, so we'd both be pushing like crazy".

DBR: So with RV announcing his retirement, did that have influence on your future? **TR:** "No, not really, I'm my own man, although obviously I can relate to his decision. Once you lose that desire to push yourself it's time to hang it up. You've got to be having fun doing this sport and want to put yourself through it, the minute you stop doing either of those things is the time to stop. If you force it, you'll get hurt. The sport is too brutal to let you off the hook in that way.

"There are other ways to be involved in this sport and still love it, like training a young kid and guiding them and seeing them improve. I've always enjoyed riding and not once has it felt like a chore but I'm not getting any younger and this sport is becoming more and more of a young man's game.

"It's a paid job and some guys do their job better than others, some make a million dollars, some make 100,000. My passion became job and if it's your job and your income it's the same as any other in that you have to work at it – that's why it's called work! If you enjoy your work the chances are you'll be better at it then paid more for doing it. You get back what you put in – not always straight away but eventually I believe that you do."



DBR: You have a young family now. How much does that affect your mindset as a racer? You do all this travelling around and you know the risks of racing, does that influence the thought of retiring?

TR: "Having a family virtually reshapes everything up to that point. Your priorities definitely change. Starting a family didn't really take my eye off racing. It helped me relax more that's for sure, but yeah, you're conscious of the future more once you have kids and of course I want to get out of this sport safe. When you're racing and have a bad day you can go home and see the kids and it puts it all into perspective. They want to play and spend time with you and don't get caught up on the stresses of work, so I've really enjoyed that.

"My daughter was born in America and I was battling for the championship with Dean (Wilson). It came down to the final round and it didn't work out for me but I went home and chilled out with my family and it helped the feeling of disappointment. It made me realise racing isn't everything. When you're 14 you don't think or look that far ahead, it feel like racing will last forever and you don't look at it with a shelf life. I've had a great career, I've been on a factory team since 2004 and I have absolutely no major regrets. Just not winning that supercross main really, that's it!"

DBR: With retirement on the horizon, what has this sport given you?

TR: "Oh man, that's a tough one to pin down. It's given me so much and it's been my life so far. I do know what I've given it though and that's 100 per cent effort. In training, in riding, in rehab - all the time I've given it my best shot and I guess that's one of the biggest things that this sport gives you. It gives you a purpose a meaning.

"It's the hardest sport in the world and if you don't give it your all it'll chew you up and spit you out, in fact it does that when you are giving 100 per cent but that's the challenge and beauty of it. You've got to be driven to keep coming back, it's a drug. I'm proud of myself and the motivation I've had to get up and go training, I'm proud of my background and where I've come from.

"I feel like I've earned everything and earned any respect along the way through hard work. I've never looked to make excuses or blame the bike, if I had a bad race, it was either genuine bad luck or I rode sh*t. In this sport, in life for that matter you have to be honest with yourself. You've got to keep looking forward and always trying to improve. Age dictates decisions you make in life, not everything lasts forever and sometimes you have to move on but whatever you decide to do if you always give 100 per cent you'll be okay and should have no regrets."

DBR: Well, I know I'll look back on your career and remember you as a real grafter and that's no disrespect to your talent in riding a motorcycle. I just think that's what has shone through more. Would you agree?

TR: "Thanks. Yeah, I guess so, like I said I've committed everything I had to this sport and

that's why I'll leave my riding career behind with no real lingering regrets. I had to work hard to match people who maybe had more natural talent. Talent only gets you so far though. When you've got someone with a little less talent but he's grinding away more than the other guy and putting the work in more he will eventually beat the other guy, in any sport.

"I've seen it with riders like Villopoto. I've seen what it takes to win championships and experienced it myself. There are no shortcuts in this sport. There's no way you'll get to the top with just the minimal amount of work. If you miss the boat then it's so hard to catch the time

"The one thing I now realise and I've heard it said times before is 'the older you get, the harder it gets'. There's a fine line where experience and being in your prime physically join in sport, then they drift apart again and as you get older, you have the experience but your body can't perform like it used too. You can maybe push through that for a few years with a good work ethic but you have to accept you can't beat time, no one can.

"It's been an incredible journey for me to get here but now I'm here I feel it's time for a new journey in a new direction. I have the option to do one more year. I haven't decided just yet what I'm going to do but whatever decision I make it'll be the right one for me and my family."











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t Preston Docks for the penultimate round of the Maxxis MXY2 series a ninth-placed finish after a crash in the opening race was a bit of a downer for series leader Oliver Osmaston but, ultimately, the day ended on a high. Grabbing the next two moto wins, the MXW Racing Chichester Honda runner topped the podium and increased his series lead.

Jay Hague (Monster Energy/DRT Kawasaki) won the opening moto and followed it up with a second but a final race off when running red hot behind Oli dropped him down to an 18th place finish and fifth overall. Hague was on course for the overall victory but ended up losing second place in the

championship to Robert Yates (Watson Plant IDS Bridgestone Yamaha) who ran 4-3-3.

Oli Benton (Hitachi Construction Revo KTM UK) had a day to remember at the Docks. He went 2-4-4 and ended up tied on points with Yates. Looking around for other notable shows, Irishman James Mackrel opened a few eyes to his talents as he roared into a second place finish in moto three.

With the October 4 series finale at FatCat in mind two more good scores for Osmaston should be enough to secure the title he narrowly missed out on last year. The scrap for the series runner-up spot could be a bit more tense though - possibly a down-to-the-wire affair with just nine points covering Yates, Hague and Dowson.

- 1 Oliver Osmaston 228, 2 Rob Yates 190, 3 Jay Hague 184, 4 Robbie Dowson 181,
- 5 Henry Williams 165, 6 David Keet 130









ROUTE 77 SERIES WRAPS UP IN PONTRILAS...

ith day two of the Route 77 championship finale completely washed away the series ended on a rather damp note and along with the dismal Pontrilas weather the below-par trophy presentation was disappointing too.

· · And then, to cap it all, in the days following series co-promoters Claudio Bernadinelli and Tom Arnold decided to go their separate ways.

hat said, the good news is both plan on running a national series in 2016. Tom's the man to contact if you fancy a crack at the ACU GT Nationals while Claudio hooks up with the MCF to launch the new MX Premier Cup. Claudio and his LS Promotions team have 2016 provisional dates and venues already sorted – you can check out the full registration details in the events section on the MCF website at www.mcfederation.com.

Both series will feature all the youth classes ranging from 50cc Auto through to MXY2. Tom Arnold's GT Nationals will have British titles up for grabs while all the MCF Premier Cup winners will have a national tag. GT National dates and the proposed track details are online at www.gtnationals.co.uk.

Getting back to the final day action at Pontrilas, the closest finish possible saw Riley Keene lift the senior Auto title. Keene and McKenzie Marshall ultimately ended up tied on championship points as a violent thunderstorm brought the final race of the series to an early end. Marshall's 3-1-3 earned him championship silver as double heat winner on the day Louie Vincent claimed series bronze.

The Auto crown for riders in the six to seven age range went to Harry Thickett. Harry finished

with a 4-2-2 card as Preston Lewis won twice with series runner-up Kayden Smith picking up the other win.

In the 65s Charlie Heyman had already secured the crown and three more wins meant he finished the series as the top individual points scorer, walking off with the massive GT Cup award. Nicely wrapping up the Junior runner-up prize, Raife Broadley went out with a neat 2-2-2 finish.

The SW85cc title went to MBO Power's rising star lke Carter. He started the day 10 points adrift of Sam Nunn but three cracking wins eventually tipped the balance his way. A disappointed Nunn had to settle for series second as Louie Kessell propelled by a 3-2-2 card climbed into third.

Very much as expected, a clear championship lead in the biggies saw TM's Callum Gasson safely over the line. On the day Sam Price picked up a maximum as Callum kept his race head on to run 2-2-5.

Just one week after missing out on the BYN title, Irishman Luke Smith was the jubilant winner of MXY2. Underlining his superiority with three more final day wins, Smith was the stand-out rider by some distance. A spirited show from Kieron Cooke going 2-2-2 piled the pressure on Jake Edey who did enough to hang onto second in the series.

In the Adult 125cc class 17-year-old Michael Ellis was right in there with a shout of winning gold. He gave it a big effort with a 2-3-3 show but that placed him eight points short of veteran champion Jim Davies.

FINAL STANDINGS

Auto 6/7

1 Harry Thickett 1107, 2 Kayden Smith 1083, 3 Kai Thorpe 1071, 4 Neo McCartney 971, 5 Lincoln Hasted 916, 6 Alfie Osborn 880

Auto 7/8

1 Riley Keene 1128, 2 McKenzie Marshall 1128, 3 Louis Vincent 1062, 4 Ellis Poole 983,

5 Harrison Greenough, 6 Finley Boxhall 964

Junior 65

1 Charlie Heyman 1201, 2 Raife Broadley 991, 3 Kyle Ingram 952, 4 Bradd Timmis 928, 5 Arai Elcock 871, 6 Ollie Colmer 791

SW85cc

1 lke Carter 1121, 2 Sam Nunn 1114, 3 Louie Kessell 1052, 4 Lewis Wood 1028, 5 Ryan Mawhinney 933, 6 Dylan Woodhall

BW85cc

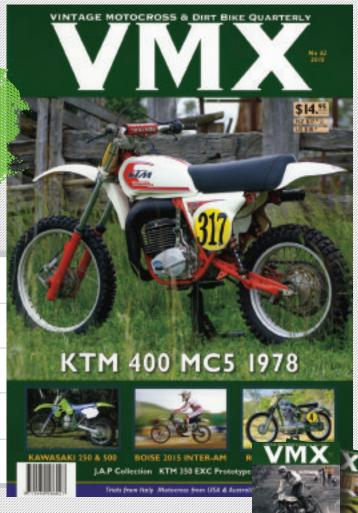
1 Callum Gasson 1055, 2 Sam Price 1031,3 Jake Winnard 947, 4 Drew Anderson 931,5 Danny Rapson 929, 6 Declan Hunter 863

MXY2

1 Luke Smith 1115, 2 Jake Edey 1033,3 Kieron Cooke 1028, 4 Daniel Shepherd 863,5 Myles Saunders 813, 6 Dan Whitehead 778

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RITISH MASTERS CHAMPIONS CROWNED IN WHITBY...

t the close of play and with six superb rounds in the can, the Pirelli British Masters silverware ended up with Eddie Jay Wade SW85cc), Howard Wainwright (BW85cc), Jamie Carpenter (MXY2) and Callum Green (125cc). At the Whitby series finale in the SW85cc class, Eddie Jay Wade and Lewis Hall ended the meeting tied on points with two moto wins

and two runner-up finishes each. His win in the last race earned Hall the overall as the title went to EJW.

The series concluded with Wade and Hall winning three rounds each but with Team 'Green's Hall missing a round through injury he finished as series runner-up. With a solid show Dylan Woodhall beat wildcard runner Lewis Wood to third at Whitby as series third went to fifth overall man Brogan Johnstone.

The BW85s endured the worst of the muddy conditions on day one. The opening heat win went to Dylan Spencer - his first win of the campaign - and following up with a 2-3-3 card he came within a whisker of grabbing the overall victory too.

The winning show came from double Sunday race winner Howard Wainwright who wrapped up the title in fine style with his third overall victory of the series. Spencer claimed a wellearned series runner-up finish as the missing heat win went to Sam Price who claimed Whitby and championship third.

Going into the finale 61 points adrift of series leader Jamie Carpenter, Oli Benton's hopes of lifting the Talon MXY2 title for his Hitachi Revo KTM UK team were slim to say the least. As it all panned out though, two moto wins for wildcard Jake Sheridan, two for Benton and one for George Purchase didn't really affect the top of the championship table.

Keeping his race head on, Carpenter smartly did what he had to do and finishing second overall, two points behind Benton, made sure the title went his way. Jake Edey took third overall on the weekend as championship third. went to final heat winner George Purchase.

Completing the picture there was another overall win for Callum Green as he lifted the 125cc two-stroke title.

FINAL SERIES STANDINGS

SW85cc

1 Eddie Jay Wade 1105, 2 Lewis Hall 870, 3 Brogan Johnson 811, 4 Reece Martin 795, 5 Jacob Russell 776, 6 Tom Marshall 758.

BW85cc

1 Howard Wainwright 1163, 2 Dylan Spencer 1038, 3 Sam Price 938, 4 Ben Burridge 799, 5 Declan Hunter 791, 6 Brandon Baker 735

1 Jamie Carpenter 1004, 2 Oli Benton 957, 3 George Fountain 854, 4 Mitchell Warhurst 814, 5 Jake Edey 805, 6 Matt Lomas 692 BRIDGESTONE SERIES BOWS OUT IN CONDOVER...

Photos by Simon Brown

ringing the curtain down on the BSMA Bridgestone National series, a sunny weekend at Condover was just what the doctor ordered.

In the 250cc Seniors and with four out of five previous round victories already in his back pocket, Harry Linton once again proved top dog as he lifted the title. Josh Biddle claimed a hard fought fifth overall over the weekend to secure second in the championship.

In the 125cc Senior section Alex Walton went into the finale with a good lead and five more largely untroubled wins did nicely for him. With four individual heat wins over the series, Oliver Costerdine made his presence felt and he finished as series runner-up.

With injured Jayden Murphy out and unable to convert his championship lead into the title the BW85cc weekend winner was James Hanscomb. The meeting also marked a debut show from young upgrade Joel Rizzi who impressively claimed three race victories. Luke Woodhouse took the weekend and series runner-up award but in the scrap for the championship top spot it was third overall man Sam Beresford who scooped the big prize.

James Hyett was in superb form and he ran riot taking overall victory in the SW85cc division. Behind him a fierce battle raged as Billy Duke, Ben Watkins, Aaron Patstone and Matthew Harries bashed plastics. Padstone raced into weekend fourth overall and that meant a wellearned BSMA title for him.

His third overall win of the series ensured Morgan Evans collected the Junior 65cc crown. Coming into the meeting with a 47-point lead, he didn't have everything his own way as Jack Taylor, Matt Tolley and Tomas Wright piled the pressure on. When it was all done and dusted the 65cc runner-up silverware went to Wright with Tolley taking series third.

It's not often that a rider goes all the way through a major series unbeaten but that's exactly what Ben Mustoe did in the Autos. Preston Lewis took second overall with Levi Davies third. Fourth overall at Condover, Luka Aston was overjoyed with series silver as Davies went away with championship bronze.



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